

FOR THE COIN-OP ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY

October 1987

PLAY·METER

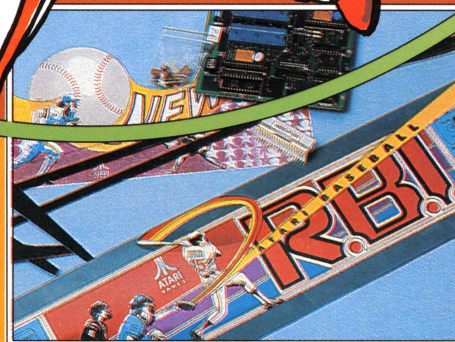


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MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE COIN-OPERATED ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY

VOL. 13, NO. 10

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FEATURES



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Pinball Lives!

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This is a fun story about a pinball lover's nostalgic recollections of his passion for the game of pinball back in the 60s. Anyone who is a devoted pinballer will be smiling with memories after reading this article.

Your Money or Your Life

56

AIDS is a serious subject. Operators are discovering that condoms and condom dispensers are more in demand than ever before as people seek to avoid this deadly disease. Peter Gurko gives a brief history of condoms and advises operators entering this market. But even this serious subject has a humorous side as you will discover in David Pierson's article, Programming Condom Machines. And as an added bonus, we have compiled a list, complete with pictures, of the latest condom machines available.

Tax Tips

84

Operators have let us know that one of the most valuable columns is Tax Tips. We have listened to them and in this issue have expanded our tax tips coverage to include everything you ever wanted to know about taxes before the most dreaded of all days rolls around--April 15!

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On the cover: As we prepare to attend the 38th annual AMOA show in Chicago, it's time for the coin-op industry to peek into the future--new technology, exciting games, imaginations running wild--it's all at our fingertips.



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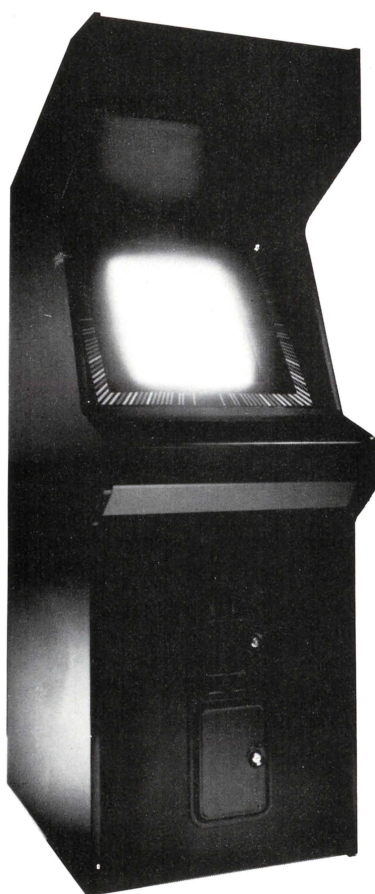
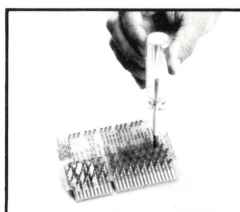
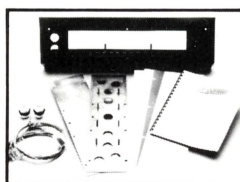
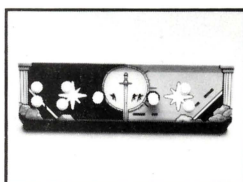
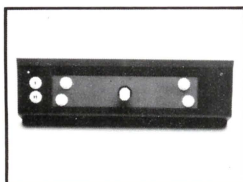
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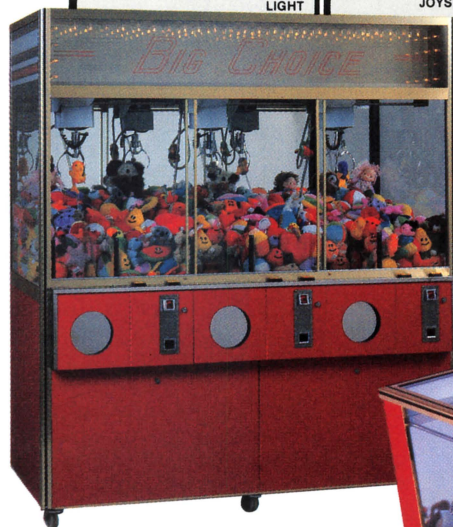
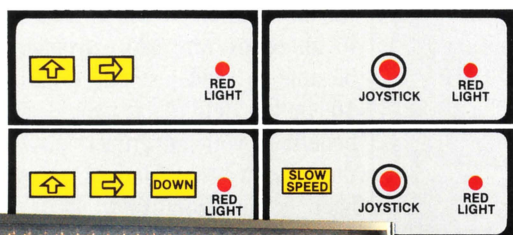


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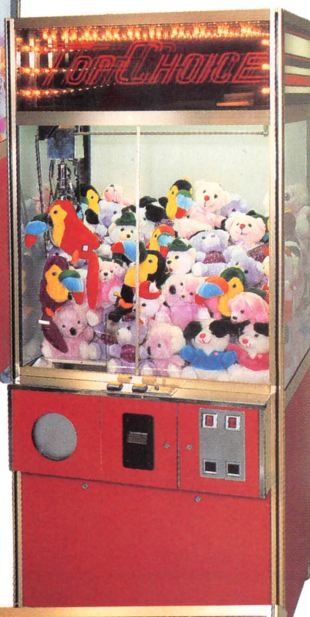


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I hope you give consideration to this idea for your future publications; it would make my job easier and your publication much more valuable to me. I have enclosed a sample of a Reader Service Card from one of my other journals to show you what I am talking about.

Bruce Parr
Bruce's Vending
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[Editor's note: Play Meter did, in fact, utilize a Reader Service card for the first several years of its existence. However, it became cumbersome doing it by hand. But now that computers have become an integral part of our business, it may be possible to begin the service once again. Thank you for your suggestion.]

Rebates Waiting

In April, 1985, ASCAP, BMI and SESAC and the AMOA reached an agreement concerning the jukebox compulsory license.

This agreement provided for a rebate of compulsory license fees paid by jukebox operators. The intent of this rebate was to achieve a better compliance by jukebox operators in registering their jukeboxes in accordance with the United States Copyright Law.

For 1985, the rebate was \$10 for each jukebox registered by June 15, 1985. The

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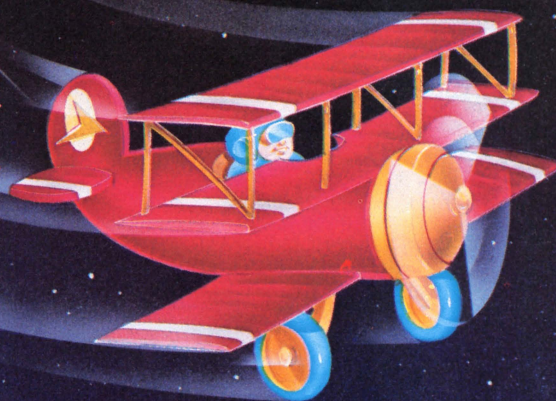
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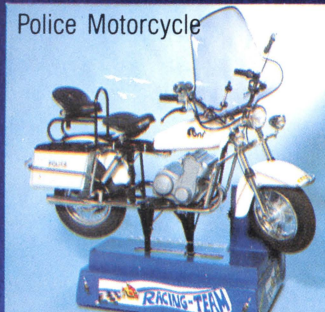
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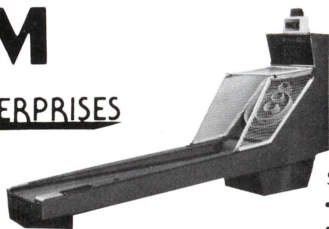
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1985 rebate was forwarded to all eligible jukebox operators on January 16, 1987, and totaled \$889,810.

As with any program of this magnitude, some rebates were not deliverable to the proper party. Fifty-nine rebate checks have been returned by the post office as undeliverable.

A listing of the operators whose checks have been returned by the post office is attached. In a further effort to ensure that all who are entitled to a rebate receive it, ASCAP, BMI and SESAC ask the operators on the list to contact: William R. Lee, ASCAP, One Lincoln Plaza, New York, NY 10023 with the following information:

1) A photocopy of the operator's canceled check or bank receipt for the original payment of the 1985 compulsory fees; 2) If this information is not available, a photocopy of the operator's 1985 application to the United States Copyright Office for jukebox certificates; 3) The current address to which the rebate should be resent.

This information should be accompanied by a cover letter on the operator's letterhead.

We would appreciate you advising your readers of this important information.

Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions concerning this matter.

L. Barry Knittel
ASCAP
New York, NY

[Editors Note: Mr. Knittel sent a copy of the list of operators who have not received their refunds. If you are waiting, you can call here and we'll check to see if your name is on the list or you can contact ASCAP directly at the address above.]

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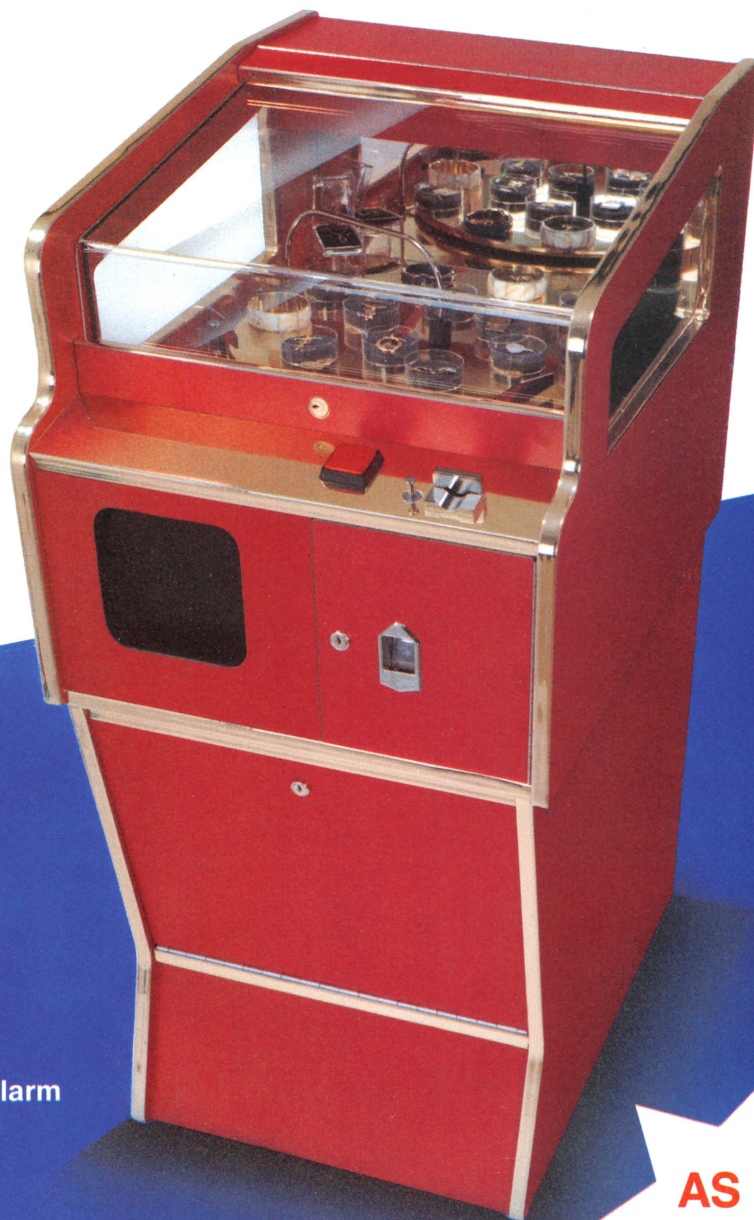
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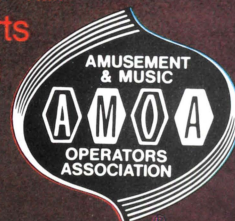
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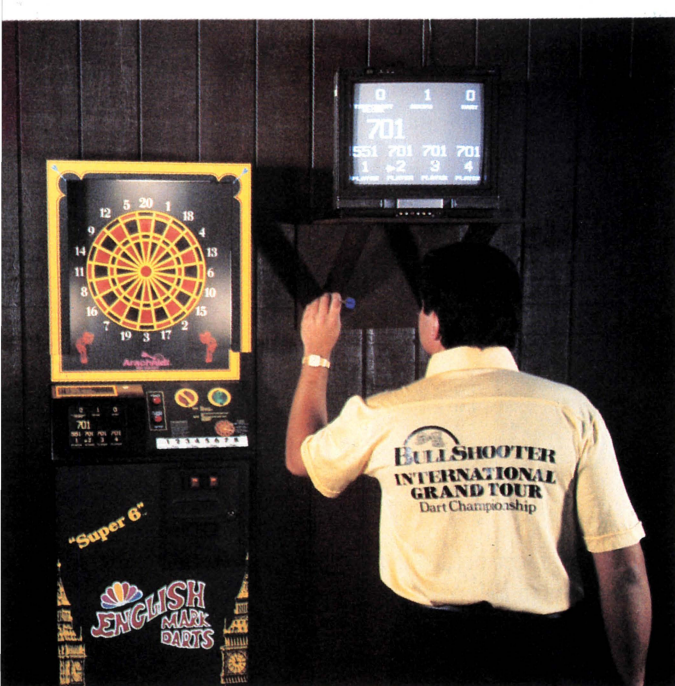
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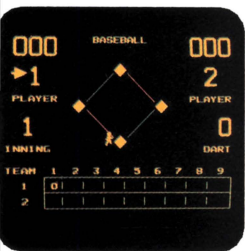
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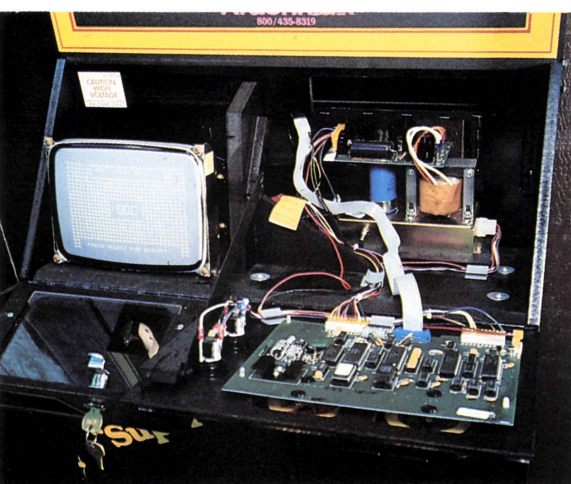
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MEMBER

ANOTHER VIEW

ON A SERIOUS SUBJECT

I'll say right up front that this will be about parallel imports and copied games. You may groan that you've heard enough and refuse to continue. But please, read what I have to say, whether you agree or not. But keep in mind that this is only an opinion, although I feel that what I have to say may be important.

Several months ago I had a three hour lay-over in an airport waiting to get back to New Orleans. The time ended up being well spent because during a conversation I had with an operator there I realized that we are far from having the parallel import issue laid to rest. In fact, that conversation led me on a campaign to talk about it more with others.

We've all heard about parallel imports, maybe you operate them, and maybe you even sell them. Whatever, it's a controversial subject that keeps crossing our paths. An operator sees an ad for a game he'd like to get but then he wonders "is it legal?" Even if he knows for sure that it is a parallel game, he may still ask, "is it legal?"

And amid this confusion is a deluge of information and misinformation. Operators are engulfed with opinions and that is where the real difficulty lies. Operators are coerced into believing that parallel boards are illegal and that there will be serious repercussions if they buy them. On the other hand, many prominent operators are operating them on their own routes, which only adds to the turmoil.

You probably read the article by attorney Richard Stern in the last issue of Play Meter. It, too, was only an opinion but a startling one indeed. He raises the question about whether it is even possible for a parallel imported board to be declared illegal. What is surprising is that these boards coming into the U.S. from overseas are often referred to as *original* boards. Because that's what they are! These controversial boards were originally sold in Japan, by the company that owns the rights to it. They are not counterfeit and they are not copies. They are original boards *intended* for the Japanese market. They show up here as *used* boards and as such are usually cheaper than new ones.

The U.S. company that buys the U.S. rights to a game from a Japanese company should have some provisions for dealing with the problem of used boards being shipped to the U.S.

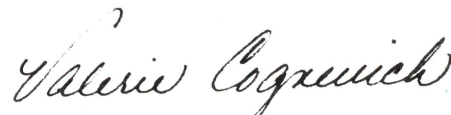
I know that's an oversimplification of a complex problem and I'm just as sure that if it was that easy everyone would do it immediately. But in talking with various industry veterans, I believe that there are avenues that manufacturers can take

to alleviate the problem before it is placed in operators' laps. It should be dealt with before blame is put on operators simply for buying the boards. Konami's *Contra* was not sold in Japan under that name. So any boards coming from Japan will be called something else and no one but Konami can sell a game called *Contra*. A game could also be sold in the U.S. first. That way the used boards coming from Japan would not be competing with new boards over here--at higher prices.

But I'm not finished. Parallel boards may not be illegal but one thing, beyond any possible doubt, counterfeit or copied boards are illegal. Under no circumstances is any operator justified in purchasing a copied board. And I mean UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES. Buying a copy of a game that someone spent quality time and money to develop is despicable. Someone told me recently that copying a game is like stealing someone's brain and that is as low as a person can get. But I'll go one step further--a person can get even lower by supporting a company that copies games.

I've been told that operators are justifying the purchase and use of copied boards by pretending they are parallel boards. Come on, guys, don't do it. You aren't "getting even" with the manufacturers, you're not helping yourself, and you're not helping the industry you work hard to support. If you are operating copied games, please think about what you are doing--not just to yourself but the coin-op industry.

There may be a place for the used boards coming from Japan, the verdict is still out on that. But there is no place whatsoever for copied games. There never was and never will be. Don't fall into a trap of thinking what you do doesn't count; if it didn't I'm sure you would go find some other line of work. And if you really don't believe your actions speak in this industry, there are a lot of us who hope you do go find another career. There are too many conscientious people who know they are important to the successful future of the coin-op entertainment industry.



Valerie Cognevich
Editor

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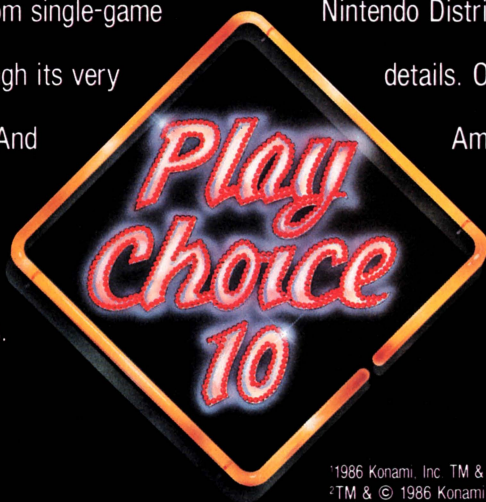
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GRAND OPENING

Kane Opens New Office

Following its successful opening of its new office in New Orleans, Kane Amusement Distributing Company does it again in Florida. On September 13, Kane welcomed operators to come by and say hi to the staff of the new office in Tampa, Fla. Over 80 people joined the Kanes for baked clams, and a look at the latest equipment.

Operator Jerry Brewer, Gulf Coast Music, said, "Things are really going great. I'm enjoying the revival in pinball machines."

Other operators echoed Brewer's feelings about the industry, talking about games that are doing well in Florida. Marisa Kane assured operators, "Florida operators can expect the same personal service that Kane Distributing offers in all its locations." She was, of course, referring to Kane's offices in Jackson and Hattiesburg, Miss., and New Orleans, La. George Kane said, "The operators in Florida are just wonderful. They are making us feel right at home."

Ralph Paukner, who ran the Status Distributing office, is the general manager of the Tampa office. He said, "I expect things to be off and running at a fast pace."



Marisa Kane's niece, Hannelore Schutz, and nephew, Gilbert Schutz stopped by the open house.



What a sweet way to welcome guests! Marisa Kane and Ralph Paukner with a custom cake.



The Kane family and employees.



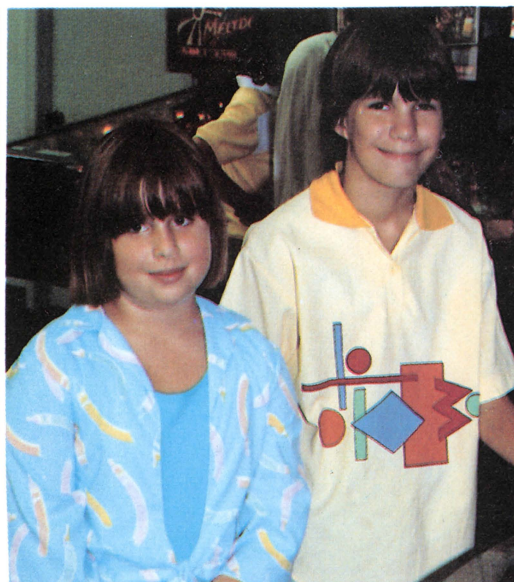
Erin Couillard shows her mom Sherry playing pinball can be fun



Jerry and Debbie Brewer of Gulf Coast Music discuss the new interest in pinball.



Quite a crowd turned out for the grand opening.



Erin and Jessica Couillard playing Capcom's new *Street Fighter*.



Kane had a variety of equipment for operators to see.



From left, Kane's Dave Yoder and Ralph Paukner with Douglas and Debbie Sernka of Player's Music.



Double Dragon draws the usual crowd.



George Kane watches the guests enjoy themselves

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Merit innovation and design excellence brings a winning combination to today's dart operators. A package so clean and elegant you'll marvel at it!

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Merit's experience in top-earning location video entertainment is unsurpassed. MERIT KNOWS VIDEO — its 10 year string of hit after hit, PIT BOSS, CASINO FIVE, TRIVIA WHIZ I, II, III, IV, V, TIC TAC TRIVIA, PHRAZE CRAZE, RIVIERA, SUPERTOP and others is your assurance of superior engineering and proven player (and operator) appeal.

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MEMBER



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TEN YEARS AGO

As many operators today are finding out, air hockey is a game that is attracting more and more players. Ironically, 10 years ago Play Meter was asking the question, "Whatever Happened To Air Hockey?" Brunswick Corp. announced that it would no longer produce the air hockey table that had taken the country by storm a mere six years earlier. "Presently there is no market for air hockey so the game has died a quiet death," said the article. Brunswick blamed the lack of interest from operators explaining, "They all lost interest. What they didn't realize was that the game remained a good income producer. It has earned back its initial



Chuck Farmer

investment several times over."

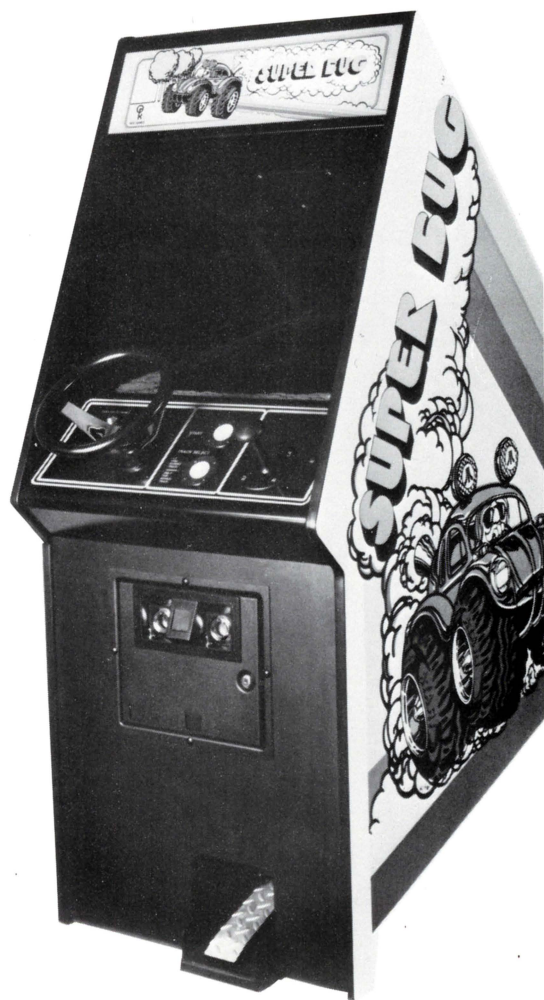
As the industry prepared to attend AMOA in Chicago, publisher Ralph Lally addressed complaints about the dates of the show, traditionally held in October. The show, of course, was originally scheduled to accommodate jukebox manufactures. Unfortunately, other game manufacturers did not fully agree the timing was right. Ralph hinted that it may be time someone else offered another show in the springtime. Little did the industry realize that Ralph would see his dream of a springtime show fulfilled two years later when the first AOE was held in New Orleans during the spring of 1979.

The coinman of the month for October 1977 was Chuck Farmer, who was Shaffer Distributing's president of marketing. Farmer was an advocate of promotions; tournaments, exhibitions, and sales promotions have all become a way of life for him, noted the introduction to the interview. Farmer explained the need for promotions, "With the price of equipment going up, the operator is ending up with less money to work with. That obviously makes it harder for the distributor. We found ourselves faced with having to come up with ideas to help the operator get more money out of his present equipment. And promotions and tournaments, we found, were the answer." He went on to explain that tournaments kept the interest in foosball alive. "Our salesmen are on the road promoting foosball," he added. Play Meter asked him if operators had attempted to use tournaments to get better commissions. Farmer replied, "That's the secret of the whole thing. There have been operators who have been able to set their tables on 50-cent play because of tournaments."

In state news, Georgia announced that the Georgia Amusement and Music Operators Association had been formed, ending 30 years of frustrated attempts to unite operators and distributors in that state. In California, some operators were blasting the association and others were praising it over whether or not CMMA had the funds and determination to follow through with its victory over non-chartered cities. CMMA sponsored a bill that would require all 331 non-chartered cities to tax pinball and jukebox operators uniformly. And meantime, in Florida, operators endured torrential rains during the fifth annual trade show where Gremlin showed *Depth Charge* and Atari previewed *Super Bug*.

Industry people on the move included Marshall Caras, who was appointed vice president of Gottlieb; Lenore Sayers, who was promoted at Atari to sales representative; and Stan Jarocki, who was named to the newly formed position of director of marketing after 27 years with Bally.

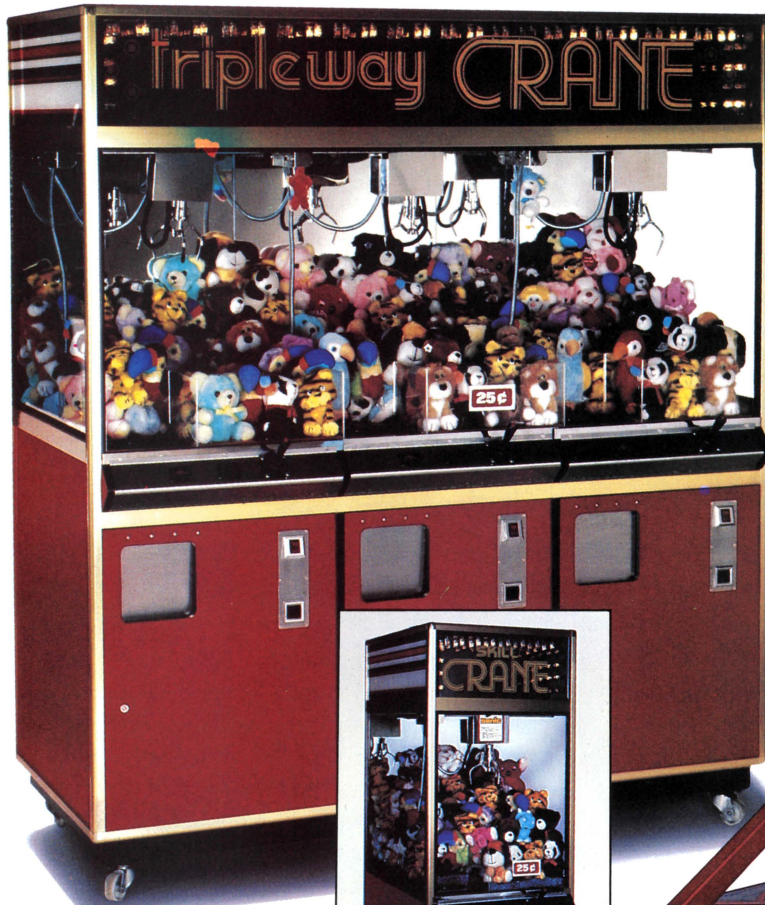
New products 10 years ago included Atari's *Time 2000*, *Triple Hunt*, *Super Bug*, and *Destroyer*; Bally's *Eight-Ball*, said to be an electronic triumph (and we're still saying it today!); Gremlin's *Depth Charge*, and Ramtek's *Star Cruiser*.



Atari's Super Bug

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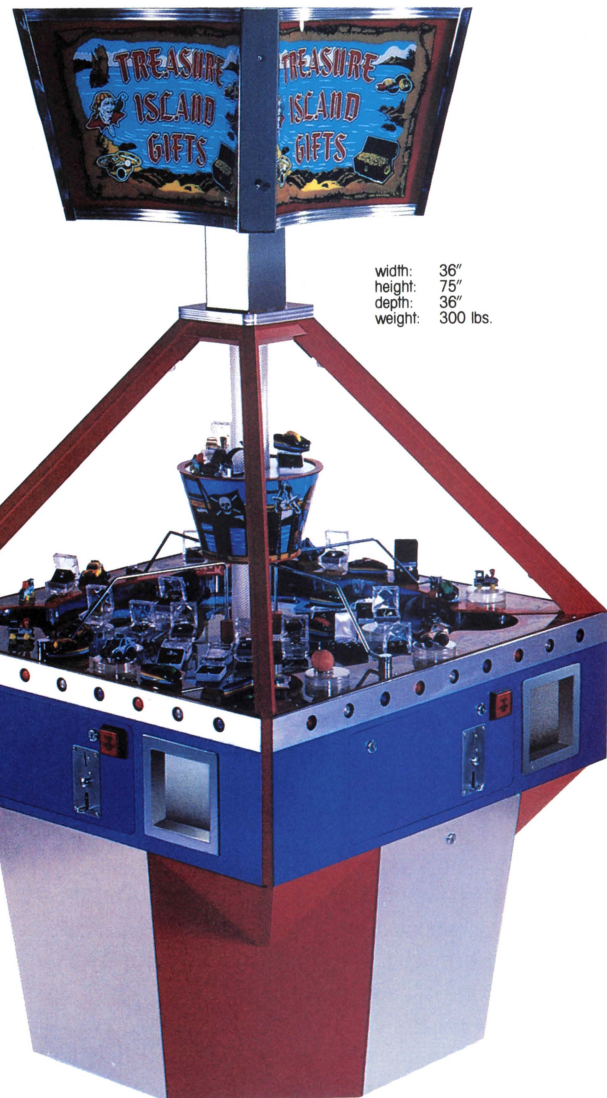


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COMPANY PROFILE

LOOKING BEYOND THE OBVIOUS



Merit officers and employees gather at the Bensalem, Pa. facility with a "we're number one" outlook.

Merit Industries is celebrating its 10th anniversary next month. Reflecting on a decade of devoted service to the coin-op industry, it's impressive to see what this company has accomplished without deviating from its original goals.

Peter Feuer, Merit's president and founder, is a low-profile man, yet is acutely aware of what is going on. He is rarely photographed and seldom is the center of attention. However, his strategy has worked. Merit's reputation has evolved through satisfied customers and word of mouth. Trustworthy and there when you need it, is how customers describe Merit.

In 1977, it was obvious that video games were gaining momentum. It was obvious, also, that many companies would make fortunes churning out the electronic wonders for a hungry audience. However, Feuer looked beyond this apparent phenomenon to tap another growing market--adults.

He saw that with the advent of electronic blips and bleeps for youngsters, adult game players were being systematically overlooked since many would never be described as true video game fanatics.

Feuer's visions have proven wise, even if it may have seemed a little outrageous at the time. "I didn't want to compete with the video game giants. In the adult market we could be a big fish in a small pond," Feuer reflected when looking back to the early days.

But not only was Merit focusing on a previously untapped market of peckish adults, it was also offering operators equipment with longevity. Video games, though popular, catered to a very fickle audience. Their insatiable appetite for new games would eventually cause severe problems in the coin-op

industry. "With video games, no matter how popular, they were in and out in several months," explained Feuer. "With a small company, I couldn't spit out new games every three months. We were in tune with what our customers needed--a game with stable earning capacity--and we gave it to them."

So Merit quietly began to offer adult games. *Jacks or Better* was the first poker game that would become the mainstay of Merit's early line of games. *Sweet Shawnee* confirmed Feuer's feelings, and expanded Merit's adult line of games.

Merit experienced consistent growth during its early years, and in 1984, moved into a new 45,000 square foot facility. Merit added another line of games, though not deviating from its goals of offering equipment with longevity geared towards adult players, when it introduced *Trivia Whiz*. Once again proving that the adult market was being largely overlooked since the controversy over video poker machines, Merit's *Trivia Whiz* was in great demand. Merit soon was offering updates of fresh, exciting questions.

While some companies may have been satisfied with Merit's success, Feuer was looking to expand further. In 1985, Merit announced it would be offering an electronic dart game--again aimed at adult players. Stating that "too many people in this industry are victimized by companies that are great on promotion but short on production and service" Feuer explains that Merit uses only top grade materials, best construction standards, and quality components. "We have never skimped in order to make a cheaper product."

Merit expanded on its dart operation in August 1986 by purchasing the assets of Nomac, Ltd. and adding *Pub Time Darts* to its product line that already offered *Bull Buster Darts*. The

current listing of available dart games from Merit includes: *Bull Buster Darts*, *Deluxe Bull Buster Darts*, *Crick-Kit 4500 & 5000*, and *Crick-Kit* add-on module for all Bull Buster and Pub Time. Listed under Merit-Nomac are: *Pub Time Darts*, *Deluxe Pub Time Darts*, *Standard Pub Time Wall Mount*, *Deluxe Pub Time Wall Mount*. VIP, a video interface processor that allows custom messages to be programmed on the dart games, is the newest product.

But promotion is indeed a strong priority at Merit. Electronic darts, though going through a tremendous growth period, need maximum promotion. Most operators who advocate electronic darts agree that leagues and tournaments are a must. Merit recognizes this fact and has pulled out all stops in promotion and helping operators run successful dart leagues.

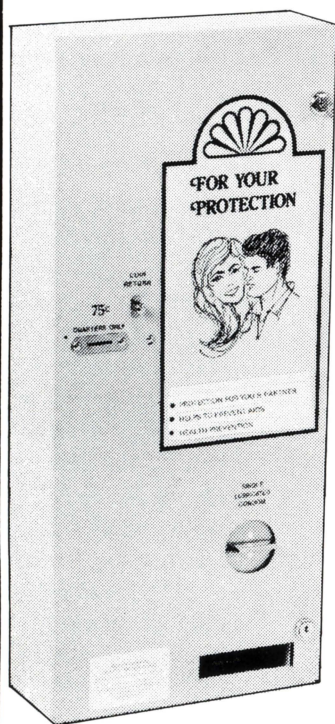
Behind the successful sales team is Mort Ansky. He joined Merit as its national sales manager in 1981 and became vice president in 1984. He had an extensive background in sales and marketing which he put to good use. His energy is boundless as he travels around the country, oftentimes with Howard Smoyer, who is the electronic dart expert for Merit. "The key to this industry is constant communication with your customers and maintaining an awareness of their needs," noted Ansky, who adheres strictly to this philosophy.

Merit's goal and philosophies have remained consistent and strong. It listens to its customers and firmly believes that the operator controls the industry. "Operators have been through

the glory days and manufacturers can't sell fluff anymore," advises Feuer.* Merit has carved its niche in the industry focusing on adult players and building quality, long lasting products.



Merit's trivia games and video card games appeal to the adult audience.



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FOR LADIES ONLY

By Patti Hawkins

Patti Hawkins is the wife of AMOA president, Dick Hawkins. She has travelled with him to nearly every state show. She has been to many AMOA conventions and knows what it's like having nothing to do while your husband is busy working. So she is heading up a program for the ladies that looks like great fun. Your husbands will probably be waiting for you this time!

It seems as though every year there is plenty to do at the AMOA convention, for both men and women. I know I've certainly enjoyed the ladies programs over the years and we plan to do our best to make this year's sessions as good as those of the past. The "Windy City" itself offers enough fun and interesting things to do to keep a person busy for a month, and we only have to fill three days.

For starters, I would like to invite AMOA ladies to the Presidential Suite, top floor, West Tower of the Hyatt Hotel for coffee and a lot of informal conversation the morning of Thursday November 5. It will give us a good chance to become better acquainted and have some "girl talk!"

On Friday noon November 6th the AMOA staff and I have planned what should be an enjoyable bit of entertainment. We've reserved the Top of the Plaza which is located on the top floor of the Doral Plaza building, just one block from the Hyatt--no need for buses or cabs. Upon arrival we'll have lunch and take in a rather unique fashion presentation called "What's Hot In Fashion."

The presentation will be done by the premiere fashion authority in Chicago; Miss Nina Ivon, fashion coordinator for Saks Fifth Avenue. Using two models and her informative narration, she will show and tell us what's in, out, what to buy, and what to throw away! She promises to bring along clothes priced in a range that most can afford--and best of all, she will bring along those accessories that really make the most basic outfit look smashing, and then she will show us how to wear them. One of the intriguing parts of this special show is that Miss Ivon encourages questions from the audience and has the reputation of answering them intelligently and with a flair. Hope it all sounds like fun to you.

Friday night, November 6, we have our annual banquet and a full evening of top notch entertainment and dancing. I've talked with Mr. J.B. Reeves, a member of the AMOA board and our banquet chairman, who promises a great dinner menu. He also let me know that he's signed "The Four Lads" as just one of the musical groups. They have been favorites of mine for many years, and I'm sure yours as well!

On Saturday November 7th let's just do whatever suits our fancy. We can shop (we're experts at that!) or we can visit any one of the nineteen museums in the city (everything from the Polish Museum of America to the Field Museum of National History). Or, how about a boat trip on the Chicago River if the weather is nice. I hear it's fun and educational, too. By the way, if you really want to feel refreshed and awake during the day, meet us in the lobby across the street for a brisk walk around the city at 6:30 A.M. The city is beautiful at sunrise!

So there's some thoughts and ideas of what we can expect to do while we are in Chicago. My husband, Dick, and I hope that your trip to AMOA's 1987 national conclave will be one you will remember for many years to come. I really look forward to seeing you!



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HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF AMOA

By Bill Stiles

AMOA is merely a month away and we are all eagerly awaiting the opportunities it will present. Here's an article that may give you some good ideas about how to use the show to your advantage.

For Exhibitors

With costs of selling on the rise, many businesses look for more efficient selling methods such as trade shows.

The big advantage in these shows is being able to contact a large number of prospects during a very short period of time. They are coming to you in an environment that is especially designed to promote products, and they are prepared to listen to your product story. You have immediate competition; but of course the selling skills of your staff will keep you ahead of the mediocrity that perhaps exists in other booths.

The number of contacts makes it imperative that you man your booth at all times during show hours. Rarely does a trade show offer hours that would make it impossible to have someone on hand at all times.

Rarely is there such an opportunity to demonstrate your product line to a group there to see what you have to sell. You wouldn't even be there if you weren't certain that those attending represented the market you want to reach.

Here are some guidelines for putting your booth together to reach qualified buyers and maximizing the opportunity of closing a sale:

1) *Make it a show.* Your booth is not just an advertisement for your company,

it's a show. Naturally, the booth sign gives identification and activity should be such as to best show your product line. Be sure to set up your booth in such a way that visitors become involved immediately with the products you want to demonstrate. Prospective buyers must be able to see your products, touch them, handle them, and thoroughly investigate them. Your "show and tell" will be more effective with every one of the five senses. Get prospects involved. 2) *Be simplistic.* Even with the best products you are going to experience some difficulty competing with all of the surrounding hoopla and activity. Often this activity comes not only from competitive booths but from the over-all show atmosphere. When people stop at your booth they want facts immediately and in convenient form. Do not clutter your booth. Don't let it look disorganized or overcrowded as visitors will shy away from that environment in favor of areas that look more appealing. Your product line should be displayed in some logical sequence so that visitors can tell at a glance what you are presenting. 3) *Your products should star.* How many times have you attended trade shows where many companies were more interested in producing a "gimmicky" or "grandiose" atmosphere. It is more important at these shows to keep attention on your products without distraction. 4) *Show as much as possible.* Without committing the error of clutter, you should try to give as much exposure as possible to your product line. If you can't possibly show your entire product line you could follow what some exhibitors do--select a

representative sampling. You should have catalogues or brochures on each product displayed. You can also have some for other products you may not have at the show but are available. 5) *Action gets attention.* If possible display products of the type where a visitor can get involved by touching or using. Demonstrations also help to focus attention. You can also resort to a video tape if lengthy descriptions are necessary.

Other products can be demonstrated by showing how they are made. Cut-a-way sections can be used to demonstrate the fine points of construction and quality of materials used. 6) *Put product to practical use.* When possible show just how your products work, but if this is not practical or feasible, show photographs of how the products were put to use.

Visitors may ask "What will that product do for me?" so be ready with answers. Have test reports, if available, with proper explanations. 7) *Get audience participation.* Let one or two people set a scene and others will flock around. 8) *Hand out technical information.* At every trade show you will find wastepaper baskets full of hand-outs visitors threw away. Make your material





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WINS
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WINS
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WINS
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WINS
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Amusement Only — The operation of these games and the features therein may be subject to various state and local laws or regulations. It is not intended herein to solicit the sale of such games in any jurisdiction wherein the same may not be lawfully sold or operated.

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technically correct (you have to be specific) but not boring. People don't want advertising cliches--they want factual material with just enough specs to describe the product, but with enough interest to read, scan, and possibly keep.

There are a lot of ways in which you can focus attention to your booth. The obvious is to give away a small inexpensive novelty. You can give out products with long-time retention--ballpoint pens with your name, product line, and address; calendars with imprints; or pocket memo books with imprints.

Another great attention grabber is a drawing. Each person wanting to participate has to fill out a ticket showing name, address, company name, telephone number, etc. These are put into a *sealed* box.

The prize is one that you were able to get at a fairly decent discount. It could be a cruise, for instance. Ship lines many times do not sell each cabin and for those left over (and they are just as good as those sold) they are willing to sell at a discount. Or you could give away a vacation, again one you got from a travel agency with some tour vacancies.

The drawing is heralded. Much ado is made about the actual time of the drawing and you try to get as much mileage as possible by getting media attendance. Greater publicity attaches to the drawing if you have a celebrity do the drawing, or have a local personality, or a local elected official participate. The lucky prize winner has a picture taken with the celebrity and the resulting publicity is worth a small fortune and give you exposure.

The entry cards form a great mailing list for sending announcements of new products, promotions, or sales.

At the beginning of this article we mentioned the necessity for having a well prepared booth. Feel hesitant preparing your own booth and exhibit? Look in your local telephone directory and you will find professionals in the field of preparing exhibits. Discuss what you want, listen to their suggestions, and together come up with a plan to put your best foot forward at what could be a rewarding experience.

For attendees

While the exhibitors are busy preparing the exciting booths and deciding how to entice you there, you should be preparing your strategy for canvassing the exhibit floor. First, get a program booklet from the registration desk and look at it. I mean, really look at it. There is usually a description of what each exhibitor will be showing and you can plan to visit those booths that you may have missed had you not planned in advance. Second, have a pen and paper (or use the notes section in the program booklet) readily available--you're going to need them. As much as you would like to believe you will remember, you won't. Write it down!

Since AMOA is a sizable show with exhibits on two floors, the best way to tackle it is one floor at a time. Carefully make one stroll around the floor to get your bearings on what company is where and what they are showing. Make notes on booths you want to spend more time on. One effective way of orienting yourself is to take a floor plan and highlight those booths you don't want to miss.

Don't get too caught up in all the hoopla at the big, impressive booths with the scantily clad ladies; remember, the companies are showing particular products so be objective about what they are showing. Play the games yourself and then stand back and watch others play. You may even want to ask their opinions when they finish playing. Others may have different viewpoints or may bring something to your attention that you didn't think of. If there are kids dominating a machine, don't get upset, take it as a sign that the game may be a winner. Ask them what they think, how it plays, and whether they think their friends might like it and why or why not. In fact, you can ask kids about any of the games--they are very objective and like what they like and hate what they hate and aren't afraid to tell you why.

Pick up the brochures that are offered. Look at them before leaving the booth, asking questions that may not be answered in the literature. Jot down new information or critical notes right on the

brochure; then you won't have to search for that cocktail napkin or matchbook you wrote notes on!

Take time to visit the support and supply booths; for the most part these are the guys you will only be able to see at a show. These may be the ones you need to focus on. Most operators will visit their distributors after the show to see the new games but many of the smaller companies have no such opportunity to show you their product, and you may not have other opportunities to see what they have to offer. They're harder to find but well worth the effort.

If an exhibitor is having a drawing for a prize, fill in an entry form--they will not only use it for the drawing but also to add your name to their mailing list. If there is no drawing, leave your business card with a note that you want to be added to the mailing list. Then you will receive any literature or announcements the companies send out.

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COMPANY PROFILE

FLASHY FUSSBALL FUN

It doesn't look like a traditional fussball table. It's red and slick and fast. The game in question is *Powerkick Soccer* by Amazing Games Corp., a Portland, Ore. company that felt the fussball market had been overlooked and decided to do something about it.



Pro players Ben Hasson, left, and Ron White play *Powerkick Soccer* at Two Timers Saloon, formerly the largest fussball location in Portland.

A resurgence in the mechanical game market and interest from distributors combined to encourage Amazing Games to produce its new table. According to Joe Peck, president of the company, "When you're going into a high tech market, old style tables look obsolete. We received input from all facets of fussball-players, operators, locations, and distributors and believe that *Powerkick Soccer* will satisfy the needs of the discriminating pro and casual players alike.

"There has been remarkable response from players in the northwest. A number of players have commented that the table is a new innovation in play."

Amazing Games has done extensive field testing and can assure distributors that the table has been thoroughly field tested. Dunis Distributing of Oregon, Music Vend Distributing of Washington, and Hanson Distributing of Michigan and Minnesota are among early supporters of the game.

"Players have been restless for years awaiting the revival of tournaments," said Peck. "Amazing Games intends to reach a new generation of players, operators, and location owners who have never experienced the fussball phenomenon of the past."

The company plans a "grass roots" promotion program and this fall is conducting a circuit of tournaments in the Portland metro area to gather player and operator interest. Full scale promotions will begin in January '88.

"We're presently working with the two largest street operators in the Portland area," noted Peck. "We want to get the attention of kids and foster their interest in the game." The new look of the table with its solid base draws attention, as well as the polyurethane paint finish in red and black.



New games are readied at the Amazing Games production facility in Portland, Ore.

Peck added that "the national market has needed to be nourished with full scale promotions. We are currently talking with three major sponsors for future tournaments."

Amazing Games feels that pros and casual players need to be separated. It plans a "pro only" circuit that will be national in scope. It also plans an international market strategy and will introduce the game overseas. The consumer market will also be considered. Don't be surprised to see an ad for



A closeup view of the slick, new *Powerkick Soccer*.

Powerkick Soccer in specialized holiday publications.

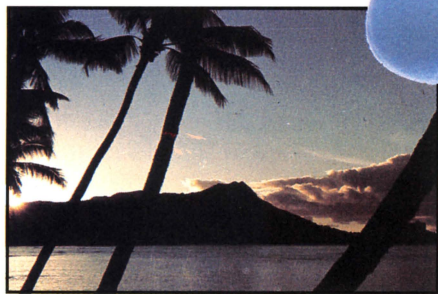
Peck has been in the coin-operated amusement industry for six years and has a background in manufacturing, operating, and marketing.

Features of the game include the one-piece, seamless, plastic laminate playfield for faster action; medium-size handle grips; one-piece wear-free bearing plates; and newly designed men. The cash box is located on the inside to discourage tampering, there is an adjustable coin slide, and the solid base design replaces the usual fussball table legs. The table measures exactly the same as other fussball tables on the market.

Peck foresees the table as a tremendous growth product in the next two to three years. "We want to develop a rapport with younger people. We want to be a growth oriented company primarily in the mechanical games area and plan to enlarge into a full line manufacturer."

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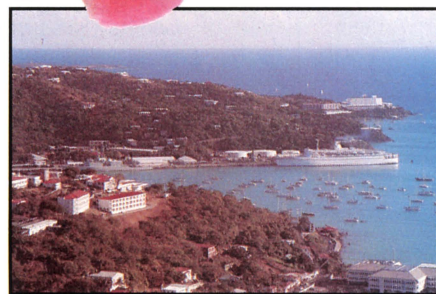
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By Nick Gallo

I swear my fingers were beginning to grow! A familiar quiver ran through them, a jolt of current, a firing of synapses in the nervous system. I had just finished reading in a business magazine the news that video games had seen their day. "The trend," concluded the report, "is back to pinball machines."

For a brief moment, I saw the flashing lights, the M-A-G-I-C targets of *Magic City*. I was sprouting flipper fingers, a condition I thought I had left behind a long time ago in an obscure deli called Gus's.

Everyone knew him as Gus the Greek. Suspicious-minded, sour-faced, and never dressed in anything more formal than a yellow t-shirt, Gus ran a deli in Easton, Pa., where I went to college. Video games hadn't come along yet, nor had the storm of critics who would accuse games like *Pac-Man* of consuming the nation's youth along with their lunch money.

No, I'm talking about the late 60's, when college students were consuming other things and campus males were divided into factions: hippies, jocks, frat boys, to name a few. Gus's, however, was common ground. You see, Gus had *Magic City*.

In the corner of the shop, little more than a take-out deli, this premiere pinball machine lived up to its name: it really was magic. Featuring a cartoon characterization of the New York City skyline, *Magic City* had flawless action and its reputation claimed it unbeatable. In part, it was because of Gus. By placing matchbooks under the machine, he'd made it more sensitive. This, of course, discouraged players from shaking it, since a "TILT" meant automatic loss of game--not to mention more quarters for Gus!

So, there we were every night: Gus,

standing behind the counter slapping ham and salami on Italian bread, one eye on his match books; and us, a motley collection of longhairs, football players, and physics majors who should have been cracking the books. Instead we were enthralled with *Magic City*, caressing it with contorted positions that could have come from the *Kamasutra*.

There was one particular time we didn't even mind losing. For about 15 minutes after closing, the time it would take Gus to clean up, he'd turn off most of the lights and let us play in the near-darkness and silence. And then *Magic City* would glow. It didn't matter that the silver ball could hardly be seen; as true followers, we were one with the ball, passing it from one flipper to the other, slipping it from one bumper to another, lining up the perfect shot that sent the ball back up the trough and around the top to light up the words

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M-A-G-I-C C-I-T-Y. And for those few moments, with the lights flashing and the bonus points ringing up the score and the sound of the ball thump-thump-thumping against the bumper, it was pinball orgasm.

Lunacy? Sometimes, I think so. With the hours I spent huddled over pinball machines during those early college years, I probably could have passed the bar exam, or at least found a girlfriend who might have appreciated my improved reflexes. Fellow pinball addicts, though, will sympathize. Surely, they'll agree that pinball's alluring combination of hands-on, physical play, and total concentration is the magnet that keeps pulling quarters out of their pockets. It's hard to believe that only a few years ago pinball beckoned for obscurity.

As readers of this magazine well know, industry analysts were reading the last rites for the game in 1979. A new breed of Japanese imports, featuring computer-generated graphics and sophisticated play, had hit the arcades. They were, of course, video games. Combining the need for fast reaction time with strategy skills found more commonly in intellectual games such as chess, the games struck paydirt. In comparison, pinball looked slow and simple, a mechanical dinosaur in the microchip age.

By the middle of 1982, the bloom was off the electronic rose, however. Blame the anti-video critics, among them the U.S. Surgeon General. Or blame the waning enthusiasm of young people, always looking to join a new craze. Maybe some kids simply found video games overformatted. Whatever the reason, it was back to the future--pinball!

The pinball of today isn't all that different from what I cut my teeth on at Gus's 15 years ago. True, solid-state electronics delivered digital scoring. And, although today's games experiment with multi-level play fields, multi-ball play, and talking commands, the basics are the same: flippers, silver balls, targets, bumpers, gates, flashing lights. And the thrills!

You see, I finally beat *Magic City*. The day of triumph was a Saturday afternoon just before spring break. Waiting for a

ride home, I ducked inside Gus's, plunked down a few quarters and began to play *Magic City*. Rat-a-tat-tat, the ball machine-gunned from bumper to bumper, spinning the digits of the scoring counter. Bam! Down went targets left and right. The ball, like a lifelong friend, glided into my flippers, held still while I froze it in mid-motion, and then zap! It would smash any target I chose.

As the game wore on, I tallied point upon point, until at last I heard the sound I longed for--the click of a free game. I not only heard it once, I heard it twice, and then three times. Then four. I was giddy with delight. Four free games!

The game was hardly over. As I played on, I couldn't do anything wrong. The ball wouldn't stop! Midway through the last of the five balls, it drained straight down the middle of the play field, past the flippers, and into the gutter, where it should have received a glorious burial. Instead it sprang back from the grave and onto the board for more life. Had I tapped into the pinball twilight zone?

For the next five heavenly minutes--it

could have been five hours or five days the way time melted--I won four more free games--making it a total of eight free games!

I never did get to play those games, however. Soon after, my ride home arrived. I was forced to leave the games on the board for someone else, but I never looked back. I felt as if I'd stuffed myself on a ten-course meal. As I left, I wanted to kiss Gus smack on his sour lips, give him the fraternity handshake, and sing the college cheer. I'd found a welcome at *Magic City*.

Every once in awhile, I must confess, I remember that day and wonder what would have happened if I had continued to play *Magic City*. I wonder if I would have continued winning forever? What if I really had entered the pinball twilight zone and re-emerged with a life totally changed because of that extraordinary moment? What if, for starters, I returned with wealth and fame?

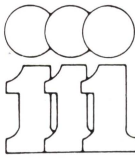
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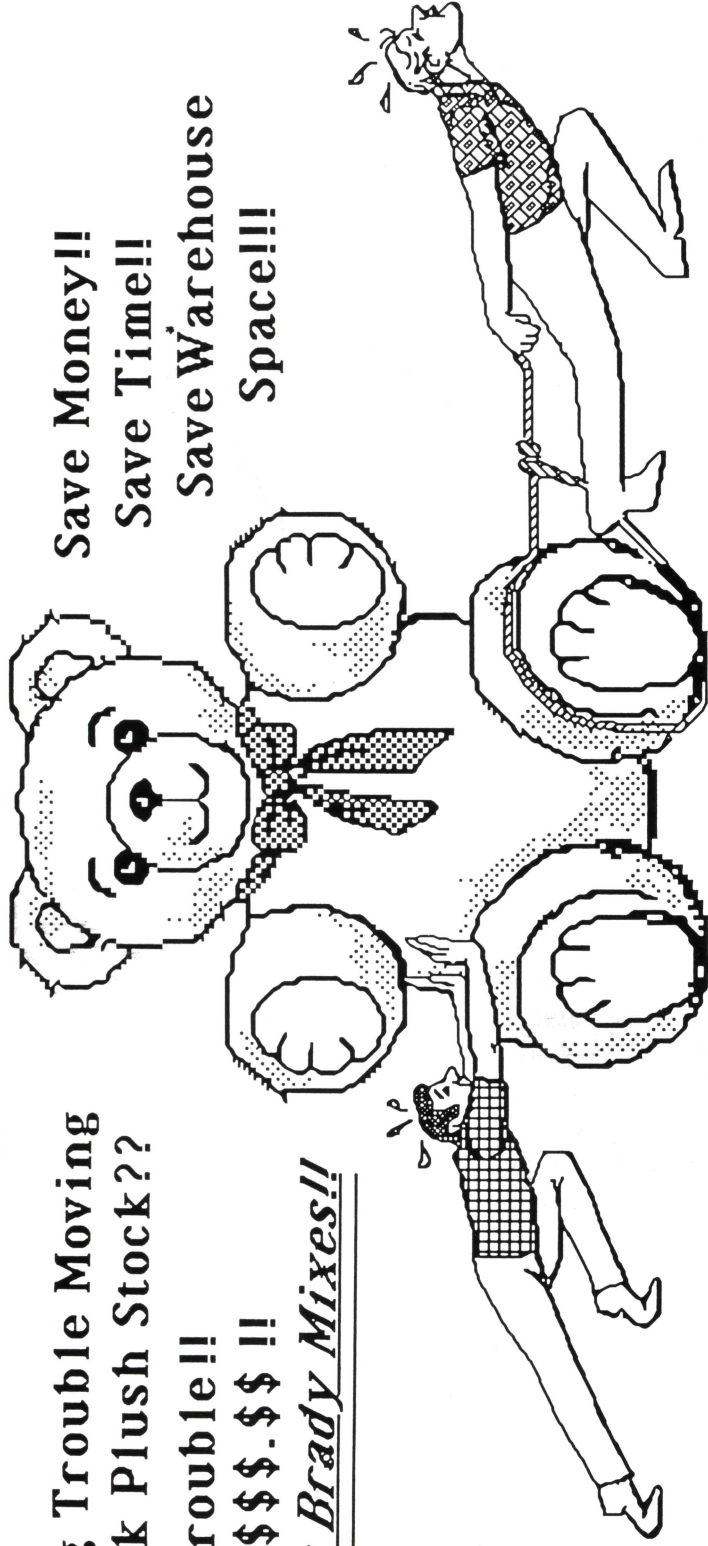
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MASTERS TOURNAMENT

During the last weekend of June, over 2,000 video game players from across the continental United States gathered at local Bally's Aladdin's Castle amusement centers to participate in the 1987 Video Game Masters Tournament.

The fifth edition of this prestigious event was co-sponsored by the U.S. National Video Game Team, the March of Dimes Foundation, as well as the Bally group. The contest featured play on over 100 different video games. The game selection represented a broad variety of both current and classic hits, accommodating everyone's favorite titles.

The Guinness Book of World Records, the internationally renowned book of extraordinary facts and figures, once again pledged to print video game scores that exceed previously published records. Guinness also announced that it would begin to recognize video game playing as a legitimate sport by printing the results of the 1987 competition in the Guinness Book of Sports Records, a landmark event for competitive game playing.

Goodwill was also greatly emphasized during the 1987 Video Game Masters Tournament. Besides allocating the collections of select machines from each store, Aladdin's Castle also donated half of every \$4.00 player entry fee to the March of Dimes Foundation to help them in



their fight against birth defects. Over \$4,000 was raised during the Masters tournament to help benefit this worthy cause.

The tournament attracted a wide array of players, ranging in age from seven to 70. Many of the competitors were women, while the guys still comprised most of the participation.

Many of these players, both winners and losers, have expressed satisfaction in yet another successful Masters contest. And although the games may change and the score grow year by year, most gamers are unanimous in their labeling of the Masters tournament as *the* video gaming event of the year.

Donn Nauert, a resident of Austin, Texas, thought that this edition of Masters was the best yet, "Bally did a great job of accommodating players," Donn explained, "I feel that this year's scores are a reflection of that."

Ron Pearlman, a California gaming pro with a number of records under his belt, took home the top score on

one of the more popular contest machines, *720 Degrees*. With an impressive 500,000 on the expert difficulty, Ron shared his feelings on the contest, "The contest atmosphere was great. I was able to top my personal high score during the tournament."

Steve Ryno, another California native and a veteran of the 1986 contest, was "very satisfied" with his performance, "The Masters competition allows top players everywhere to compare skills and show your stuff. The contest gives you the chance to brag without being egotistical," he noted.

"This year's contest was great!" exclaimed U.S. National Video Game Team representative Steve Harris. "The participation was incredible and the scores were truly world-class. Bally's Aladdin's Castle did an excellent job of administering the contest and fostering spirit among the players. We're all very excited about next year's tournament!"

By the time you read this the 1987 edition of the Guinness Book of World Records should already be on store shelves; displaying the talents of over a hundred of the world's leading video game players. Check it out and start playing those games! Be sure that you're ready for the 1988 Video Game Masters Tournament when it begins June, 1988.

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NEWS

Jukebox Committee sets National Jukebox Month

The new Jukebox Promotion Committee has established October 1988 as National Jukebox Month and plans a big consumer promotion effort for the occasion. The committee was recently appointed by the Amusement and Music Operators Association (AMOA) to monitor new jukebox technologies and serve as a liaison between AMOA members and trade groups in the recording and jukebox manufacturing industries.

The committee's formation comes on the heels of a July 29 jukebox roundtable meeting in Minneapolis, and an August 4 meeting in Washington, D.C. with representatives of the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA). The next

meeting of the committee will be held October 19 in Chicago.

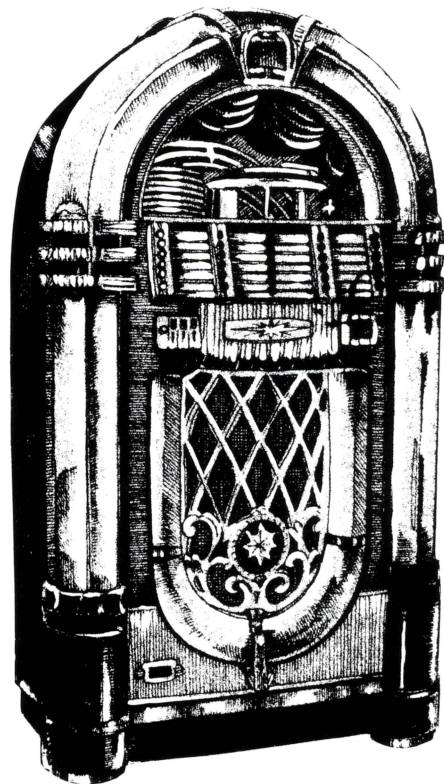
The committee has formally stated its purpose as threefold:

1) To create a greater awareness of the jukebox and its entertainment value to the general public as exemplified by the creation of a National Jukebox Month.

2) To develop jukebox selling tools and to communicate information to the jukebox operator so that he can compete more effectively in a changing marketplace.

3) To develop a closer relationship with the recording industry and related groups that would be allies of the jukebox industry.

Chairman of the jukebox promotion committee is Clyde Knupp of Amuse-O-Matic Co. in Fort Dodge, Iowa, and currently AMOA treasurer. Members of the committee are: Randy Chilton of



Chilton Vending in Wichita, Kan.; James Hayes of Gem Music & Vending in Dayton, Ohio; Steve Lieberman of Lieberman Music Co. in Minneapolis; and Joe Pankus of Seeburg Corp. in Addison, Ill. Also sitting on the committee are AMOA's current slate of officers: Richard Hawkins, president; Walter Bohrer, Jr., first vice president; and Jack Kerner, secretary.

Serving in an advisory capacity are: Bette Lockhart of Rock-Ola Manufacturing Co., Joel Friedman of Rowe International, Rus Strahan of NSM-Loewen Group of Companies, and Jerry Reeves of Wurlitzer.

The committee will be monitoring several technologies affecting jukeboxes including up-and-coming compact discs (CDs). These and other technologies, including cassettes, are making traditional 45 RPM's--a mainstay of the jukebox industry--appear increasingly obsolete.

The committee will work with the record industry as well as jukebox manufacturers toward goals in the interest of AMOA member operators. It is estimated that AMOA's 1,200 members



Brad King of the newly reformed video manufacturer Gremlin enjoyed eating crawfish at the spring ACME Show so much that he decided to "suck heads" Mexican-style tackling Mexican crawfish.

supply music for 102,000 locations nationwide, and that this conservatively translates to some 66 million impressions every week. There are an estimated 300,000 jukeboxes in the U.S.

A high committee priority is the development of marketing programs for AMOA members to promote jukeboxes to their locations. Look for jukebox promotion buttons at the AMOA Expo, the first outward push for increased jukebox awareness.

Showcase expands

Showcase, Inc., the Sarasota, Fla. crane manufacturer, has enlarged its office, manufacturing, and showroom facilities from 6,000 square feet to 12,000 square feet. Showcase cites increased sales and full production capacity as major forces behind the expansion.

In addition, Dr. Ron Jaffe, president of Showcase, is working on the development of two new exciting games

for release later this fall. One game, as yet unnamed, will be a two-player rotary merchandiser scheduled to be shown at both the upcoming AMOA Expo and IAAPA Show. The unit will be in a 27-inch wide cabinet and feature a no-jam gravity self-loading system, tilt alarm, and prize door lockout.

Showcase adds that quality is now the company watchword, indicated by the upgrading of components, new anti-theft designs, and simplification of operation--items that receive the most emphasis.

Recently, the company has become the crane of choice for a 400 store convenience chain. The 1988 game line from Showcase includes four models of cranes: a competitive double, two singles, a cocktail crane, and the new rotary.

Showcase maintains the same address and phone number as before, having enlarged into neighboring space. For further information, contact Showcase at (813) 355-8667.

Concerns over adopting Berne

For years there has been conversation regarding the U.S. joining the international Berne Convention for copyright protection. A mid-September edition of *Billboard* focused attention on this issue again and expressed concerns from U.S. music groups.

The thorny question from the recording industry is how to interpret Berne's "moral rights" provisions. According to *Billboard*, "The music groups want the U.S. to make clear to Berne that questions involving 'paternity' (ownership) and 'integrity' (mutilation and distortion protection) rights can be dealt with through existing U.S. law."

Feelings run high in regard to Berne and there are fears of unjustified lawsuits resulting from the interpretation of "moral rights." An anti-Berne group of 12 magazine publishers has been formed,

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New Audio Skee-Ball is also available in various other sizes — from small models 6 or 8 feet long — which are ideal for kids — on up to the big model shown here.

To operate, players simply drop a coin into a slot, and they're served 9 balls — and a lot of fun. Every round is tallied by a "big brother" electronic scoreboard.

A variation of the standard game is also available: *Bonus Ball*, with two more scoring pockets that can deliver 100 extra points per pocket.

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and these companies want Congress to specify that only U.S. laws can be used in the handling of "moral rights" questions.

Berne is supported by the Reagan administration. Three congressional bills are pending that would have the U.S. join the convention.

A position paper on the Berne Convention is expected soon from the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA).

Konami offers game adaptor

Konami, Inc. of Wood Dale, Ill. now offers 36 to 56 pin adaptor P.C.B.'s that enable the operator to simply plug in the new 56 pin P.C.B. rather than rewiring video game cabinets previously set for Konami's former standard edge connector. The kit works for other games as well.

Prior to *Top Gunner*, all Konami games used a 36 pin edge connector. All new Konami P.C.B.'s utilize a 56 pin edge connector, one that complies with the standard set by the Japanese Amusement Machine Manufacturers Association (JAMMA).

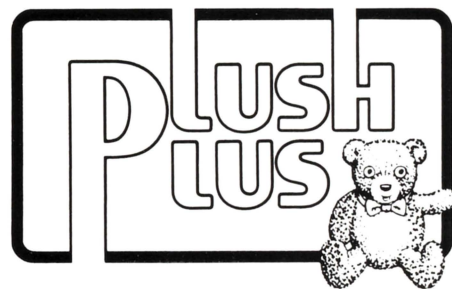
Games using the former 36 pin configuration include: *Super Cobra*, *Pooyan*, *Locomotion*, *Circus Charlie*, *L'il Hustler*, *Juno First*, *Time Pilot*, *Gyruss*, *Tutankham*, *Turtles*, *Super Basketball*, *Mega Zone*, *Pandora's Palace*, *Time Pilot '84*, *Track 'N' Field*, *Hypersports*, *Road Fighter*, *Yie-Ar Kung Fu*, *Kicker*, *Rush 'N' Attack*, *Mikie*, *Frogger*, *Amidar*, *Roc 'N' Rope*, *The End*, *Jail Break*, and *Nemesis*.

For more information, call your local authorized Konami distributor.

Plush Plus from Betson

Betson Enterprises of Moonachie, N.J. introduces a new customer service, Plush Plus, in addition to its present line of merchandising games.

Features of the service include different-sized plush/novelty kits pre-packaged to appeal to a wide audience, specialty kits designed for the



Betson *Fantasy Island* rotary merchandiser, plushier plush kits for locations needing higher quality items, and free consultation assistance for customizing orders (in a two-day turnaround). Orders are shipped out the same day.

Betson understands the sometimes frustrating task of stocking plush, jewelry, and novelty items and lends its 50-plus years of experience in this field to the new service.

Betson offers a free sample kit (retail value \$10) packed with a "big choice" selection and guide for operating cranes. Just send \$3 for postage and handling fees.

In other Betson news, the company will debut a moderately-priced single upright crane, *Action Claw*, at the AMOA Expo. Electro-Automaten will supply Betson with original Belgium boards and mechanisms, and U.B.I. will manufacture the cabinet and assemble the unit. In addition, starting this month, all Betson cranes will be microprocessor-controlled.

For more information on Plush Plus or new Betson products, write Betson Enterprises, 6 Empire Blvd., Moonachie, N.J. 07074; 800/524-2343. In New Jersey call (201) 440-2200.

Hot new properties

As the date for AMOA Expo '87 approaches, several hot new video properties are hitting the streets, among them Sega's *After Burner*, Bally's *Xenophobe*, Data East's *The Real Ghost Busters*, Nintendo's *R-Type*, Romstar's *Top Speed* and *Time Soldier*, Atari's *R.B.I.*, and SNK's *Touchdown Fever*.

In late September, Sega introduced *After Burner* to distributors in San Francisco. Data East proved it wasn't "afraid of no ghosts" when it introduced

The Real Ghost Busters in San Francisco in addition to its *TKO Boxing* for the Nintendo VS. System.

Read more about these and other new product introductions in our November issue at AMOA.

Valley kicks off fall dart schedule

The Valley Co. of Bay City, Mich. has developed and sponsored a three-level tournament for electronic darts players that kicks-off this fall. Local winners can become eligible to compete in the North American Championships to be held at the Hacienda Resort Hotel in Las Vegas, Nev. on March 5, 1988.

According to Alan Schafer, Valley vice president of marketing, "Electronic darts is on the move and Valley is committed to keep it moving. Our heavy involvement in the Valley National 8-Ball Association has proven that organized play is essential in the advancement and

improvement of coin game enjoyment. It is our goal to provide darts game players with the best possible organization and tournament play, as we have with pool."

The first level of play determines local qualifiers for the North American team in the categories of men's singles, women's singles, and mixed doubles. The winning team, composed of the men's champion, the women's champion, and the mixed doubles champs, will be awarded the Valley Cup plus an expense paid trip to Japan in the fall of 1988 to represent North America in competition and exhibitions against leading Japanese electronic darts teams.

This North American team of two men and two women will compete in the Valley Electronic Darts World Championships against teams from Europe, Asia, and other continents.

Each participant in the local qualifiers will receive a specially-designed collector's beer mug (valued at \$12) as a memento of the competition. There is a one-time entry fee of \$15. All entry

fees are paid back in the form of travel vouchers issued to winners of local qualifying matches who compete in Las Vegas.

Players enter solely through their local coin operator, who is supplied with a complete tournament kit at a nominal charge. Included in the kit are announcement posters, schedules, tournament flow chart, rules, registration forms, and more. All local competition will be held on operator-owned electronic darts machines. The Las Vegas competition will use *Valley Royal Darts* machines with the international-sized target and the double bull's-eye.

Schafer emphasized that Valley is an active supporter of the concept of friendly competition. He noted, "That's why we are backing the AMOA National Dart Association in every way possible, including financially. And we back the coin operator just as strongly, too, because we believe that healthy operators mean a healthy industry. And there's no better way to do this than through strong

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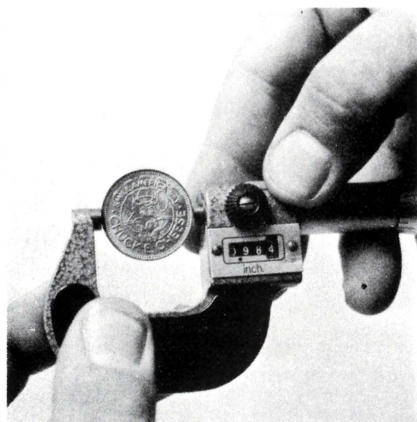


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league and tournament play. Now, this three-level tournament with its international flavor means world-wide competition in electronic darts has arrived, and we anticipate its every success."

For more information, contact The Valley Co., 333 Morton Street, Bay City, MI 48706; (517) 892-4536.

Twin Galaxies has new "maze" game

Lazer Maze, Photon, and Blaster Tag have a new cousin--*The Warlord*--the latest in "maze" sensation games that involve a walk-through experience. It was introduced in late summer at the Twin Galaxies arcade in Ottumwa, Iowa.

Twin Galaxies received media attention five years ago as a location for recording world video game scores. Video game creator Bill Mitchell, Jr. of Ft. Lauderdale, Fla., owns the arcade.

Walter Day, game consultant and scorekeeper, explained that "three-quarters of the video game arcade has been converted into a winding maze with blinking lights and hidden passages."

As with other maze games, players don vests and caps with targets that react to laser gun fire from other players. The maze is constructed of 8-foot high plywood walls. There are 12 stations where players must pick up markers without getting "hit" more than five times. There are three different scenarios with the goal of collecting all the markers.

The Warlord members receive status level cards for rising point totals and compete for a position as one of the top three players. Members pay \$1.50 to play the game; non-members pay \$2.

Barone joins SNK

SNK Corp. of America has announced the appointment of John Barone to the position of vice president of sales for the coin-op division.

Barone joins SNK after having recently been director of sales and marketing for Data East, U.S.A. Prior to that he was national sales manager for Exidy, Inc.



John Barone

"We are pleased and excited to have John join our company," stated Paul Jacobs, president of SNK. "In a short span of four years that he has been in the industry, John has developed an outstanding rapport with distributors around the country. His sales and marketing expertise will be of great value to our future growth in America."

Arachnid plans for BullShooter III

Arachnid, Inc. of Rockford, Ill. has embarked on a nine month promotion of qualifying tournaments for its third annual Memorial Day finals in the BullShooter III \$100,000 English Mark Darts World Challenge of Champions set for May 28-30, 1988.

Qualifying tournaments began in August in Seattle, Madison, Wis. in September, and Orlando, Fla. in October. Other tournaments this year will be held in Kansas City, Kan. in November and Phoenix, Ariz. in December. In 1988 host cities will include Houston, Tex. in January; San Francisco in February; Syracuse, N.Y. in March; and Dayton, Ohio in April.

All these tournaments are \$5,000, seven event, two-day playoffs. The top three finalists from each event will also receive qualifying certificates for the finals in May.

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This is truly a world challenge since qualifying tournaments are also slated for West Germany, Australia, France, and Japan.

According to Sam Zammuto, Arachnid's tournament director, "The regional tour format of \$5,000 tournaments was very successful last year. Players were really excited having good money tournaments to go to in their area. Regional tournaments during the BullShooter II last year drew as many as 400 players."

Operators play a most important role in the BullShooter championship tournament. As with past years, operators will be able to qualify local league players. Operator members of the English Mark Darts International Association (EMDIA) may purchase qualifying kits containing the certificates, colorful location posters, hotel information, and an informative packet of rules and guidelines for setting up and running a successful BullShooter league program. Membership to the EMDIA is \$50 annually, which includes 50 copies of BullShooter magazine each month to distribute to locations and players.

Three new events have been added to the 1988 finals, including master pro singles and two cricket events-- singles and mixed doubles.

For more information, contact Arachnid, Inc., 6421 Material Ave., P.O. Box 2901, Rockford, IL 61132; 800/435-8319 or (815) 654-0212.

Aladdin's Castle honored

In recognition of their continued support of substance abuse prevention programs, Aladdin's Castle has been honored with an award following the springtime launching of the "Be Smart! Don't Start! Just Say No!" campaign against drugs.

Aladdin's Castle is Bally's national chain of over 300 fun centers. The anti-drug campaign was launched by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and includes a music video, TV and radio public service announcements, print materials, and community-based prevention efforts all aimed at 8-12 year olds.



Bob Fliday accepts award on behalf of Aladdin's Castle for support of the "Be Smart! Don't Start! Just Say No!" anti-drug program.

The official campaign poster for "Be Smart! Don't Start! Just Say No!" program is prominently displayed in each of the Aladdin's Castle locations nationwide.

Colorado Game Exchange adds product lines

The Colorado Game Exchange of Denver announces the addition of Atari, Nintendo, and Konami product lines to its distributorship.

Atari Games Corp. has chosen the company as exclusive distributors of their product for the Rocky Mountain region. Nintendo of America and Konami, Inc. have both added the company to its list of distributors.

In other Colorado Game Exchange news, the second annual summer customer appreciation program has concluded and a number of the company's customers are set to have a three-day all expense paid trip to the Golden Nugget in Las Vegas, Nev. October 18-20. The customers earned the vacation as a result of their summer purchases.



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You'll find new reports with more information and new sort options that let you analyze your business in different ways. You'll find the new Profit! Control System fast, reliable, and easy to use. It even recognizes cost-of-goods so it can track your product vending equipment.

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And then you can print exception reports using any of 12 sort options. Get a list of equipment with the best improvement (or worse decline) in revenues since the previous collection. Compare the performance of all equipment of the same name or type. Print a report of all non-profitable or negative cash flow equipment. You'll have all the answers you need.

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And getting the answers is no great effort. Installation is quick and using the program is easy (there are help messages on the menus). Entering collections is simple; equipment transfers, different token rates, and minimums are no problem.

And you never have to write another collection report by hand. Collection forms list all equipment at each location and include any percentage split to be paid to locations.

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AMOA to honor Senator Zorinsky

The Amusement and Music Operators Association (AMOA) will honor the late U.S. Senator Edward Zorinsky (D-Nebraska) with its Award of Merit at the AMOA Awards Banquet on Friday, November 6.

Zorinsky was a longtime friend of the coin-operated amusement and music industry, having been a former coin-op distributor before being elected to public office. He died at age 58 on March 6 in Omaha after suffering a heart attack.

Mrs. Cece Zorinsky will attend the banquet and accept the award in her husband's memory. The award is given in recognition of "unique contributions" to our industry.

The association will also present the annual Jukebox, Games, and Outstanding Cigarette Machine Promotion Awards at the banquet. Ballots were sent to all AMOA members in late September.

In the games category, nominated for most played video (dedicated) are: *Contra* by Konami; *Double Dragon* by Taito; *Out Run* by Sega; and *Road Blasters* and *Rolling Thunder* by Atari.

Nominated for most played conversion kit are: *Arkanoid* by Romstar, *Ikari Warriors* by Trade West, *Rastan* by Taito, *Top Gunner* by Konami, and *World Series* by Cinematronics.



Senator Zorinsky

In the pinball category, nominated are: *Arena* and *Monte Carlo* by Premier, *F-14 Tomcat*, *High Speed*, and *Pin-Bot* by Williams.

There's also a category for most popular crane and nominated are: *Big Choice* by Betson, *Hollywood Skill Crane* by Hollywood, *Kramer Skill Crane* by Kramer, *Skill Crane* by Grayhound, and *Skill Crane* by SMS.

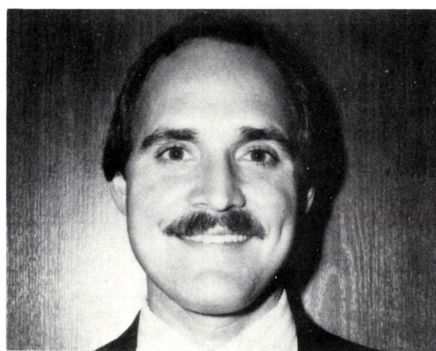
This year there is a "most popular other game" category that allows operators to write in choices.

Music category awards include best pop record, best country record, and best soul record. A cigarette vending machine promotion award will also be presented.

Premier appoints Mueller

Premier Technology announces the appointment of Robert Mueller as director of domestic sales and marketing.

Mueller has an extensive and diversified background outside the coin-op industry that includes six years with Ford Motor Company's sales and marketing division. In addition, Mueller has served as project manager for a steel fabrication company and as sales



Robert Mueller



Joseph DeMarsico

manager for a manufacturer's representative firm dealing in industrial equipment.

Gil Pollock, president of Premier, said, "We are pleased to have Bob as a part of our staff. I believe the variety of his experience will bring new ideas and concepts to the industry, which will be very beneficial to our distributors and their customers."

AMOV hosts convention and show

The Amusement and Music Operators of Virginia will host its 1987 Convention and Trade Show at the seaside Gavalier Hotel at Virginia, Beach, Va. October 22-24.

Included in the schedule of activities are seminars on pinball and CD jukeboxes. Tom Cahill of Williams Electronics will conduct the pinball seminar and Joe Pankus of Seeburg will conduct the CD jukebox seminar.

Attendees may also have breakfast with Frank "The Crank" Seninsky, who will discuss cutting cost and increasing income.

The exhibit floor will offer a display of the latest in games, music, supplies, and services for the coin-op industry.

Social activities will include an evening cruise on the bay, a general membership meeting with guest speaker Bill Cravens of Capcom USA, election of officers for 1988, a cocktail hour, and awards banquet.

Kiddie Rides USA names DeMarsico

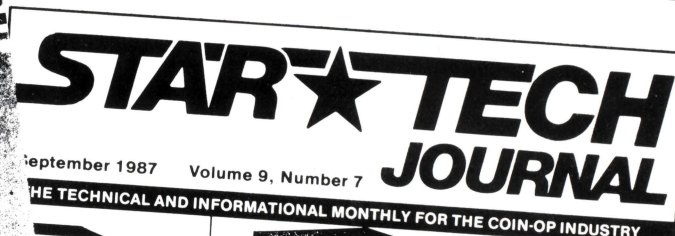
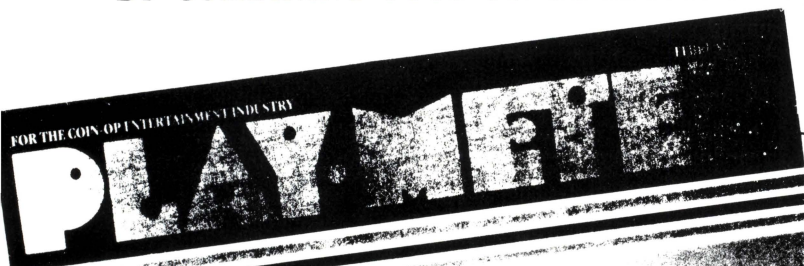
Kiddie Rides USA has named Joseph DeMarsico as western regional marketing director.

DeMarsico brings to Kiddie Rides USA 15 years of experience in the coin-op business.

Robert Versman, president of the company, stated, "With the opening of a western regional office in Denver, Kiddie Rides USA extends its commitment to be the largest kiddie rides supplier in North America."

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Snyder moves

Bob Snyder & Associates, Inc., the game consulting firm, has moved to new office facilities in its home city of Walnut, Calif.



Bob Snyder

Industry members may contact the company at the new office: 20264 E. Carrey Road, Walnut, CA 91789; (714) 595-1237.

Pizza Expo coming in December

The National Association of Pizza Operators (NAPO) will hold the largest Pizza Expo ever at the Las Vegas Convention Center and Las Vegas Hilton Hotel December 8-11.

The schedule of events includes a program of seminars and short courses, a reception, three days of exhibits including amusement games, and presentation of the Golden Pizza Awards.

Seminar subjects include menu marketing, putting the squeeze on cheese, sauce secrets, and others. Peer panels will feature round table discussions, a chance to express concerns, suggestions, comments, and problems and solutions regarding pizza delivery, cost and pricing, marketing, and public relations.

For more information, contact NAPO, P.O. Box 114, Santa Claus, IN 47579; (812) 937-4464.

Hill acquires ArtSoft

Hill International, Inc., an international management consulting firm, announces the acquisition of ArtSoft, Inc., a Connecticut-based company providing turnkey hardware and software systems for performing arts organizations and other specialized software products.

A future software application being developed by ArtSoft is credit card activated vending.

According to Arnon Garonzik, Hill's vice president of administration, "ArtSoft pioneered the development of remote credit card verification technology used in the sale of videotape vending and box office tickets. We feel our technology will ultimately facilitate telemarketing and broad-based credit card activated vending, two areas where we see expanded future opportunities. The trend will be towards credit card activated vending and major self-service transactions."

NAMA selects contest winners

The National Automatic Merchandising Association (NAMA) has announced six first and second place winners in the 1987 NAMA Newsletter and Sales Brochure Contest as well as 12 honorable mentions.

Contest winners will be honored at the NAMA Convention at the Civic Center in Philadelphia October 29-November 1. Winning entries will be on display in the exhibit hall.

Newsletter division winners are: Air Capital Vending, Inc., in Wichita, Kan., first place; Jomar Sales and Vending Co. in Peabody, Mass., second place.

Sales brochures division winners for companies under \$20 billion in sales are: Bell Food Services of Glastonbury, Conn., first place; Modern Vending, Inc. of Indianapolis, second place. In the \$20 million-plus sales category, there was a tie for first place between All Seasons Services, Inc., N. Quincy, Mass., and Weisman Enterprises, Inc., Minneapolis.

Honorable mention for newsletters went to Coffee House Corp., Madison Heights, Mich.; Crown Vending, Buffalo, N.Y.; Goodman Vending Service, Reading, Pa.; and Master-Brew Beverages, Inc., Northbrook, Ill.

Derringer Co., Inc., Cincinnati, received an honorable mention in the internal newsletter category.

Honorable mentions for sales brochures in the under-\$20 million sales category went to: Automatic Service Co.,

Inc., Atlanta; Bev-O-Matic Co., Homestead, Pa.; Burch Food Services, Sikeston, Mo.; D&S Food and Vending Services, Inc., Butler, Wis.; Goodman Vending Service, Reading, Pa.; Owen Vending, Inc., Janesville, Wis.; and Woburn Vending, Woburn, Mass.

Walter Reed, NAMA director of public relations, noted, "The quality of sales and marketing tools used by our industry has improved considerably since our first contest seven years ago. We hope that others will be stimulated in their own efforts when they see the winning displays at the Philadelphia show."

WMS gives quarterly report

WMS Industries, Inc. has announced that revenues for the fiscal 1987 third quarter increased \$7,510,000 or 24 percent, to \$38,789,000 from \$31,279,000 in the comparable quarter of fiscal 1986.

The company reported income before taxes of \$2,061,000 in the current quarter versus a loss before taxes of \$1,396,000 in the prior year period. Net income for the quarter was \$2,061,000 or \$.26 per share compared to net income of \$319,000 or \$.04 per share (after a tax benefit of \$1,829,000) for the fiscal 1986 third quarter.

Revenues for the nine months ended June 30, 1987 increased \$11,254,000 or 13 percent, to \$98,023,000 from \$86,769,000 in the comparable 1986 period. Income before taxes increased \$554,000 or 33 percent to \$2,233,000 from \$1,679,000 in the fiscal nine month period.

Net income was \$2,233,000 or \$.28 per share compared with net income of \$4,085,000 or \$.52 per share (after a tax benefit of \$2,780,000) for the prior year period.

The increase in revenues for the fiscal 1987 third quarter and nine month periods primarily resulted from increased amusement game revenues. The continued strength of the amusement game industry and the success of the company's popular pinball games have resulted in the ability to improve margins and increase profitability.

Billboard TOP TEN

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HOT 100

TITLE	ARTIST
Label & Number/Distributing Label	
1. I JUST CAN'T STOP LOVING YOU	MICHAEL JACKSON WITH SIEDAH GARRETT
	EPIC 34-07253/E.P.A.
2. DIDN'T WE ALMOST HAVE IT ALL	WHITNEY HOUSTON
	ARISTA 1-9616
3. LA BAMBA	LOS LOBOS
	SLASH 7-28336/WARNER BROS.
4. HERE I GO AGAIN	WHITESNAKE
	GEFFEN 7-28339
5. WHEN SMOKEY SINGS	ABC
	MERCURY 888 604-7/POLYGRAM
6. DOING IT ALL FOR MY BABY	HUEY LEWIS & THE NEWS
	CHRYSALIS 43143
7. CAN'T WE TRY	DAN HILL (DUET WITH VONDA SHEPARD)
	COLUMBIA 38-07050
8. I HEARD A RUMOUR (FROM "DISORDERLIES")	BANANARAMA
	LONDON 886 165-7/POLYGRAM
9. LOST IN EMOTION	LISA LISA & CULT JAM QJ-COLUMBIA 38-07267
10. TOUCH OF GREY	GRATEFUL DEAD
	ARISTA 1-9606

ADULT CONTEMPORARY

TITLE	ARTIST
Label & Number/Distributing Label	
1. DIDN'T WE ALMOST HAVE IT ALL	WHITNEY HOUSTON
	ARISTA 1-9616
2. I JUST CAN'T STOP LOVING YOU	MICHAEL JACKSON
	EPIC 34-07253/E.P.A.
3. ONE HEARTBEAT	SMOKEY ROBINSON
	MOTOWN 1897
4. DOING IT ALL FOR MY BABY	HUEY LEWIS & THE NEWS
	CHRYSALIS 43143
5. LA BAMBA	LOS LOBOS
	SLASH 7-28336/WARNER BROS.
6. LONELY IN LOVE	DAN FOGELBERG
	FULL MOON/EPIC 34-07275/E.P.A.
7. LOVE POWER	DIONNE WARWICK & JEFFREY OSBORNE
	ARISTA 1-9567
8. WHEN SMOKEY SINGS	ABC
	MERCURY 888 604-7/POLYGRAM
9. NO ONE IN THE WORLD	ANITA BAKER
	ELEKTRA 7-69456
10. WHO'S THAT GIRL	MADONNA
	SIRE 7-28341/WARNER BROS.

COUNTRY

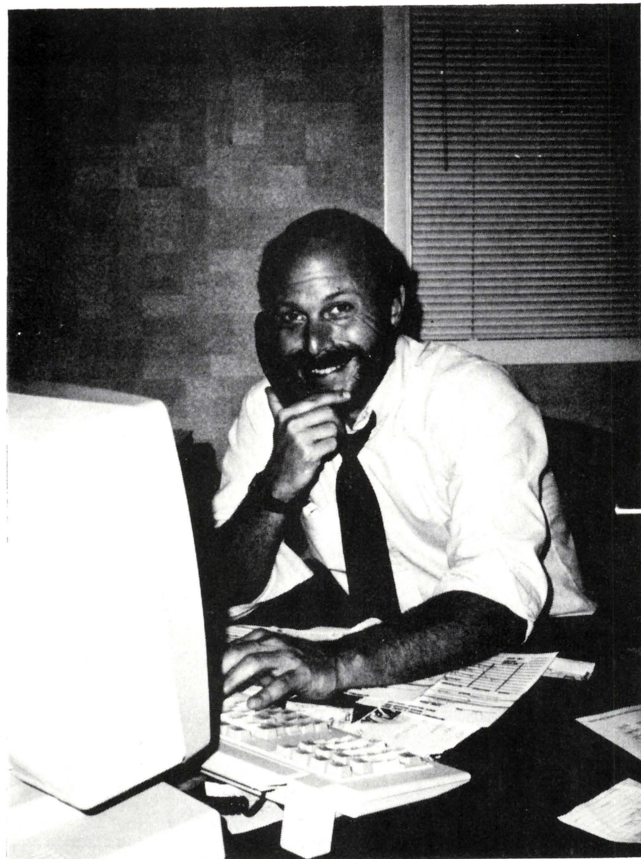
TITLE	ARTIST
Label & Number/Distributing Label	
1. THIS CRAZY LOVE	THE OAK RIDGE BOYS
	MCA 53023
2. THREE TIME LOSER	DAN SEALS
	EMI-AMERICA 43023/CAPITOL
3. YOU AGAIN	THE FORESTER SISTERS
	WARNER BROS. 7-28368
4. THE WAY WE MAKE A BROKEN HEART	ROSANNE CASH
	COLUMBIA 38-07200
5. FISHIN' IN THE DARK	NITTY GRITTY DIRT BAND
	WARNER BROS. 7-28311
6. I'LL BE YOUR BABY TONIGHT	JUDY RODMAN
	WARNER BROS. MTM 72089/CAPITAL
7. I WANT TO KNOW YOU BEFORE WE MAKE LOVE	CONWAY TWITTY
	MCA 53134
8. CRAZY OVER YOU	FOSTER AND LLOYD
	RCA 5210-7
9. DADDIES NEED TO GROW UP TOO	T. THE O'KANES
	COLUMBIA 38-07187
10. LOVE REUNITED	THE DESERT ROSE BAND
	MCA/CURB 53142/MCA

HOT BLACK

TITLE	ARTIST
Label & Number/Distributing Label	
1. I JUST CAN'T STOP LOVING YOU	MICHAEL JACKSON WITH SIEDAH GARRETT
	EPIC 34-07253/E.P.A.
2. I NEED LOVE	L. L. COOL J
	DEF JAM 38-07350/COLUMBIA
3. LOVE IS A HOUSE	FORCE M.D.'S
	TOMMY BOY 7-28300/WARNER BROS.
4. LOST IN EMOTION	LISA LISA & CULT JAM
	COLUMBIA 38-07267
5. DIDN'T WE ALMOST HAVE IT ALL	WHITNEY HOUSTON
	ARISTA 1-9616
6. NO ONE IN THE WORLD	ANITA BAKER
	ELEKTRA 7-69456
7. (YOU'RE PUTTIN') A RUSH ON ME	STEPHANIE MILLS
	MCA 53151
8. HOW SOON WE FORGET	COLONEL ABRAMS
	MCA 53121
9. CASANOVA	LEVERT
	ATLANTIC 7-29217
10. WIPEOUT	FAT BOYS & THE BEACH BOYS
	TIM PAN APPLE 885 960-7/POLYGRAM

COINMAN INTERVIEW

BY VALERIE COGNEVICH



Steve Koenigsberg

"A distributor has several major responsibilities where there is value added."

It's hard to believe that Steve Koenigsberg has been in the coin-op business only eight years. His dedication to the industry and his company are impressive. He works alongside of his employees, never passing up an opportunity to praise them. His energy and enthusiasm are incredible. He is often the last one to leave the office and then continues to make phone calls on his car phone during the drive home. "Why waste time!" could very well be his motto.

State Sales and Service Company, Baltimore, was started in 1960 by Steve Koenigsberg's father, David, and his partner, Sam Wiseman. Wiseman passed away about 11 years later leaving David the sole owner. Steve describes it as the kind of business that was up and down, never any big money but the family wasn't starving either. Electronic pinballs and, later, video games gave the business a shot in the arm. Shortly after the video boom, David found out he had cancer. His son, Steve, had an established career in hospital administration with 15 years and several degrees devoted to that industry. Steve made a difficult decision to leave the industry he knew to work in the coin-operated entertainment field to be with his dad for what time he had left. David, it turned out, had less than a year to live. Steve admits that he often wondered what he was doing in this business. "It was all very strange," he recalls. The people he worked with knew their business and he felt he didn't so it was scary and a little overwhelming, as he describes it. But he forged ahead, earning his spurs during the video bust. "I viewed my job as damage control," he quipped, adding that he learned fundamental lessons that will stay with him the rest of his life. State Sales began a period of growth, including the purchase of a Bally office to strengthen its vending division. State Sales today is a homespun, healthy organization, principally staffed by young, energetic, loyal employees who have pitched in to make State Sales successful.

Since your dad was in the business while you were growing up, you must have formed a perception about the industry. Was that perception different from what it was when you got involved?

When I was real young I would go with him on collections. One location had a gorgeous barmaid who would give me a rather wholesome hug and I remember thinking what a great business! But there was another side. During the old days my dad had developed some conversions for Bingo machines and helped support a family working until late at night. I remember holding flashlights or solder for him. So I remember the dedication and hard work.

"I'd rather sell less product but be able to offer the operator a trade-in than sell more product and have the value of the operators' routes diminish."

What did you think when you got into it?

To show you how naive I was about the business, I said to him: Dad, I have to ask you one question. Is the coin operated business influenced by organized crime? My father burst out laughing and said, "You, too!" That was a reflection on the reputation this business had. My father assured me that was not the case. And since I've been in it, I've found out for myself that it's not the case. I have gotten to know some of the most wonderful people I've ever met in my life.

Distributors seem to have gotten into the position of handling almost every manufacturers' equipment. Have you recently evaluated which lines you will carry?

Distributors must review their lines but must recognize that the reality of the market is that most distributors can get product whether they represent the factory or not. As such, the nature of an exclusive distributor is somewhat of a myth. There are certain advantages but not necessarily like the pre-video era when there was more scrupulous attention to areas of the country that are represented by certain distributors. In reviewing lines I am torn between a couple of competing interests. On one hand I believe in loyalty--you do business with people; you don't turn away from them. And because we are in the entertainment field, no one manufacturer is at the top of the heap 100 percent of the time. For a distributor that can translate into unprofitable business because we take so-called test product from factories we represent and some should never have seen the light of day. We don't force those pieces onto operators just to unload them.

But as a distributor do you feel forced to take those games?

We *buy* games to test; they aren't given to us. That's one of the costs of being a distributor. The loyalty I mentioned before can have a financial penalty attached. You can't cherry pick products. Unlike a jobber that can selectively buy only what is hot, a good distributor is a stocking distributor. He will take test samples even if they turn out to be dogs.

You are talking about the loyalty of the distributor to the manufacturer, but don't you think that loyalty should go both ways?

I don't mean this to sound unfair, but many manufacturers

have management that are non-owners, unlike distributors where the owners are working. Because the manufacturing leadership is a non-owner, it's just a job. There is a focus on *today's* profitability, the short-term profit and loss affecting their own company, because that translates into their own track record, both in terms of salary bonuses and perhaps the next job. But that mentality doesn't focus on the overall future of the industry. With that kind of a mentality you wouldn't expect that there would be the kind of loyalty that a distributor would like to have. I could cite examples of factories taking away or splitting the line on long-time distributors. The problem is that they have manufacturing capabilities, they have R & D costs, and they have leadership that is geared toward making short term profits. As a result they have to do business differently than a distributor like me who hopefully will be around in 40 years dealing with the same people from the same company. It's a different kind of attitude.

Do you also operate? Why or why not?

It is just company philosophy that we don't. A part of our philosophy is that the distributor's role includes some form of value added to the product. If an operator has a problem and needs to talk to someone that knows the industry, he shouldn't have to question where advice is coming from. Our role is that of a neutral consultant to the operator. If a distributor is also operating, he may not have that credibility. Then, too, when product is tough to get, where does an operator/distributor make the choices between his routes and his customers' routes. These are credibility issues that our company chooses not to have questioned. We would rather devote our attention to distribution and give our customers value added without them having to question our motives.

Has getting into operating ever been tempting?

We have looked at the profitability of operating in tandem with distribution. It would be a very natural and profitable part of our business. But I think that those principals I mentioned before transcend the dollars. Some distributors started out as operators. My dad gave up operating when he started State Sales.

But there are some that seem to be doing both successfully.

You'd have to get their formula. But if you look at New



The electronics department features sophisticated equipment. Here Joe Driscoll and Steve Polichroniadis (electronics manager) show how it works.

England, from the mid-Atlantic straight up, you won't find too many distributors that operate. I happen to think that in our market, there are strong, solid operators that could fill voids created by normal attrition.

An operator called not too long ago complaining about a distributor who also operates using the advantage of having test games before they're offered to the general operator population to secure locations. Have you heard this complaint?

It's a case of a distributor with his operating hat on and I think it speaks for itself. There are two ways of running

this business. One is what I call the consultative approach; the other is the selling approach. State Sales is managed as a consultative business. Our constituency is operators, not the factories. We spend time with the operators, not just selling games, but finding out about their routes, where they are going, where they are likely to go on rotation and recommend accordingly. A strictly selling organization will suffer the same problem I mentioned about factories--living for today rather than tomorrow. Maybe one of the reasons we have not had to reclaim routes like many other distributors is because our operators perhaps were treated a little differently in terms of equipment they bought and advice they got.

Why should a manufacturer go through a distributor?

A distributor has several major responsibilities where there is value added. One of the functions of a distributor is financial. He provides the capital to buy machines to turn into income generators and is able to wait the time to get paid. The way the factories do business, distributors have to pay promptly whether the product moves out of the warehouse or not. So we are a financing arm much like the operator is to the small local taverns. How do the taverns get money to expand, modernize, or get over some hurdles? They go to the coin machine man. That's his value added. The second thing is maintaining a parts and service department. And, I've gotta tell you they are usually lost liters from several points of view. There is a fair amount of money tied up in parts inventory. It's more efficient for a distributor than if you ask every operator to store a like amount of supplies. But there is a cost: handling cost, obsolescence cost, carrying cost, shrinkage cost. Taking all those things into consideration, carrying costs are about 32 percent a year for maintaining inventory. If I spend a dollar for a part, by the end of the year it costs me a dollar thirty two and that



From left, Laura Knight (business office manager), Cee Cee Heavel, and Suzanne Matousek.

doesn't count salaries for the people to handle it. It's the same with service. We have invested thousands of dollars in diagnostic equipment. We have a state of the art computer tied into the same chip duplicator that NASA uses. It cost over \$25,000 to put that package together to be able to service equipment instead of sending boards back to the factories which are notoriously slow. I have a commitment to reinvest our profits to make us a better service oriented organization. If you ask the average operator to spend what I spend on diagnostic equipment he'd look at you, rightfully so, and tell you you're nuts. There's an efficiency for me to do it for operators in the territory instead of them doing it individually. The same with the service people. Almost all of my service people are electronic graduates and are paid accordingly. These are the guys who solve the problem after the operator has taken it as far as he can. Everything that comes in here gets fixed and there is a cost to that.

The third point is looking at our sales people in a consultant role. You would pay an accountant for his services; if you were in trouble with the law you would hire a lawyer. We do not commission our salesmen because we don't want them pushing bad product or making bad deals. They are salaried but at the end of the year they may get a bonus based on the overall profitability of the business and their relative contribution. Having these people there not to peddle product to put a penny in their own pocket, but to give the best advice and guidance they can, has a cost associated with it. They are business consultants and that, too, is value added. As a businessman, I must make a profit to provide these kinds of services as well as others. Another example is exchanging views with elected officials, hoping for a better understanding of our industry when they are going through the legislative process. We're active in associations. We take time on national level trying to influence the industry and its movement in a positive way. And that all takes time, effort, and money. But it's designed to make this industry not just a today industry but profitable for years to come. You can't mortgage the future by saving 25 bucks today. If you do, then you take a page out of the current budget deficit where our grandchildren are going to have a problem. This is my livelihood and I want this business to be around in another 40 years.

What is the major difference in selling kits versus dedicated games?

We saw the advent of kits to fill a void. Operators were in a depression and weren't making a good enough living with only dedicated equipment. The kit provided a less expensive, not necessarily better, vehicle to give operators as much penetration as he could get with available dollars. The kit business now has gone from 25 or 30 percent of our gross revenue to about 10. One reason is that operators are healthy and many older cabinets no longer lend themselves to conversions. There's plenty of junk on the street and



Jim Fowler heads up vending service.

operators have seen that they can get 20 to 30 percent more income from a good-looking cabinet. The dedicated equipment is much more sensible. Kits have a place but they are not the only alternative.

Someone said shorter production runs and used equipment holding its value is what was used to gauge the state of the industry. How do you feel about that?

I'd rather sell less product but be able to offer the operator a trade-in than sell more product and have the value of the operators' routes diminish. There is absolutely a higher value today on used equipment. I think factories, for the most part, realize they are better off leaving an un-met demand than they are having an over-supply. Everyone then is healthier. The problems the factories have, and it's a real problem, is that there are lead times for parts and gearing up to build a game. No one has a crystal ball to project the exact number the market can comfortably absorb. And because of that you will have some mis-guesses. You have those both at the factory level and the distribution level who are giving the factories the orders. That means that there will be times when we have more product than we should. From State Sales' point of view, we tend to evaluate a product by our market. And since we stay in our market we take a reasonable number that market will absorb. Again, if we leave some sales on the table--great. That means the piece will retain its value.

That seems to go along with what you said about knowing your customers.

You're right. It would be extremely difficult for any distributor to reasonably guess a number if they don't know their customers and their needs.

How about cranes? Cranes have been compared to overseas where the money from pokers enables operators to finance the straight amusement equipment. Do you agree?

Yea, how about them! There is an issue here about whether you can make a living with straight amusement equipment--video, shuffle, flippers, pool tables, jukeboxes, etc. And

you've heard the argument from people who operate the fast equipment--video card games--that you must have that kind of equipment in order to pay for the amusement equipment. When I see earnings reports on the coin-op amusement equipment I can see that amusement equipment is earning its own keep and doesn't need help from other sources. Those who pay attention to their routes, don't let them go stale, rotate efficiently, and keep the games working and clean on location can make a damn good living without the so-called cash cows. We were a Johnny come lately with cranes because there were cranes here years ago that went the way of the woolly mammoth. People got tired of the zippo lighters and things of that nature. They had their run and became extinct. Our concern when cranes came back was that operators would rush into it without knowing what the market was or whether the things being vended would have durability and allow a fair return on investment. We began selling cranes when we



Kathy Brantner, parts manager

found that operators could expect a fair return. We have never really promoted them although we have sold quite a few. At some point there may be an oversupply of the same kinds of merchandise and the public will get tired of it. When that happens earnings will drop. Cranes have also brought back the blue suede shoes people who have cut outrageous deals, who have taken over the professional operators' turf, knocked them out of locations, or put pressure on them from locations. I see that kind of indiscriminant entry into the business bringing the same kind of problems we had during the boom years that helped create the fall. So we were very careful not to oversupply our territory. The crane business, like video and pinball, is geared towards a given location, meets a demand, and is very healthy. But it's just one of the many tools the operator has to make a buck.

What are the biggest complaints you hear from operators?

The two biggest complaints are: you're out of certain stock and price. From their point of view they are right about being out of something--when they want it they want it. But from

a distributors' point of view it's impossible to stock enough of everything to meet everyone's needs 100 percent of the time. But it's been a pretty consistent area of agitation between a supplier and a user. We try to minimize it even if it costs us. We have red labeled parts in for customers at our expense just to get them what they need.

Generally, the complaint about price is unfair and goes back to the here and now mentality at the operator level. You saw what happened in Florida. Operators got so price conscience that they drove out distributors from the chain. Then they had a problem down there. Distributors have to make a profit. Financing and ordering product for stock without sales is a tremendous risk. For an operator to cut your throat for fifty bucks and not recognize that risk is a symptom of the short term view that can hurt this industry in the long run.

How about some good things you hear from operators?

I hear a number of good things. Every time an operator buys a piece of equipment, he is exercising a vote of confidence in this industry and our sales are up! That means these guys are confident. Every time I look at my accounts receivable its like an electrocardiogram of the industry. When the receivables are healthy, the operators are healthy. There are seasonal problems but if you know the reason you can read through them. I have to say that for the last 18 months our barometers, not just conversations with people, our actual quantitative barometers have all been plus. Conversationally, operators are feeling more bullish about the business. There are some very personal comments to State Sales, like thanks for the help. I think we are in a good period if only the industry can govern itself so it doesn't go crazy again.

Are we being lulled into a false sense of security?

My sense is that people are a lot more savvy today. Once burned OK, twice burned you're a fool. There were hard lessons learned in all areas of the business during the video boom/bust. I see some of those lessons on the verge of being forgotten but so far none have crossed over. I think our products for the last 18 months have been exceptional. They operate well and I don't see an oversupply. It's an example of people being more responsible. Also there's been a pinball revival. The new pinballs are entertainment centers of sights and sounds that we haven't had before. The new pins have attracted a new player base. Music is advancing technologically thereby providing the consumer with better quality product. If you add it all together, the focus may be on video but all product lines have never been as good. The largest problem we have as an industry is that while inflation influences the cost of everything we do, whether it's labor or products, we are tied into a staple quarter that grows smaller each year. Eventually something's going to happen to give this industry a long overdue shot in the arm.

What would you most like to see changed in the industry?

The thing that would make the most sense to me would be for us to go back in time to when distributors stayed within a certain territory and did the best job they could for those operators. The operators built up loyalties and got use to the value added services the distributor provided and appreciated them. Back then the factories respected the fact that the distributor was the gateway into that territory. I guess what I'm talking about is going back to an industry where all elements of the chain are entitled to make a reasonable profit and put their value added stamp on their own enterprise. The operator has a value added so the locations don't buy their own equipment; the distributor has a value added; and the factory has a value added in terms of creativity and earning power. I'd love to see it go back to that. I think we were all a lot happier and healthier in those days.

I've heard people talking about getting back to what you are talking about.

I think we make inch strides to that end. The problem is that people fear it in some respects. They fear that without price competition prices will become unreasonable. But in reality the market and earning power of the equipment is what dictates the value of that equipment. I'm not talking about raising prices, I'm talking about not having to arm wrestle over \$25. We operate on a standard principal--we charge each one of our customers on a uniform mark-up, meaning that XYZ company will have the same mark-up whether it's an easy to get product or a hard to get product. The notion there is to become a reliable supplier, someone operators can count on, someone that won't jack them around when the product is hard to get. I've got customers that don't bat an eye on our price quotations because they know we are consistent. There are times when those guys get a value added without being charged for them. When one of our customers has a piece broken into, for example, I don't charge for labor, only parts. I won't compound an operator's misfortune by giving him a stiff labor bill. Another example is when an operator needs a cable on a machine that is just out of warranty--we give it to him. I guess what I'm saying is if an operator arm wrestles me for every nickel, when it comes time for his machine to be repaired when it gets broken into, I'm less apt to write off that labor. A good distributor recognizes that pricing range and does things that even it out. Some distributors reading this will call me a crazy man but I'm here for my customers and I'll be fair with them.

Most manufacturers are in the home market. Has it affected your business?

All I have heard is reactions. None of it really supports it



The sales team from left, Ed Kuchaski, Nick DeSebastiano, Mark Noble, Steve Koenigsberg, and Nick Sarioglou.

in any substantive way. I don't really know if it even affects my business. I've heard people say that it is the bane of the industry, that it keeps the players off the streets. But I've had others say it stimulates players who then go play the arcade game that is more intense and in a higher bracket. I have a feeling, just a feeling, that the more exposure to video that someone has the shorter his interest will be. In other words, if you have a player that is going through a several year period where he is interested in video, he may play for two years in a rather predictable consistent way. But if he now has it at home as well as in the arcade, he may not have a two year span, he may have a one year span. I just know that if I eat a steady diet of strawberries, I will get tired of strawberries.

But if you really like strawberries, and although you eat them at home, if you knew you could get some better ones somewhere wouldn't you go there?

I have a challenge for you. You eat strawberries for six months and I'll bet you won't be so fond of strawberries after that period of time. Even if the kids get good on the game at home and then go to the arcade to show off, so to speak, that's a negative for the industry because that player got his learning curve on a game that was free instead of putting quarters in the arcade game to learn it. He's playing longer for less money. For an operator to make a profit on a machine he must have novices playing along with the experts to average out the time. If you think about it, it's simple mathematics. And the other potential negative, although no one has proved it in any logical sort of way, is a shortening of the video age for that given player when he's exposed to it at home. It may be only a month in the life cycle of a video player but it may be a year. Either way, it's taking quarters out of our industry.

YOUR MONEY... OR YOUR LIFE...

By Peter Gurko

Condom dispensers are giving the coin-op industry a shot in the arm, an infusion of fresh blood, all because of the presence of some very bad blood. By now we've all become well acquainted with the existence of AIDS and it's almost unparalleled proliferation. Thus I won't detail the virus' medical aspects but instead look at a related opportunity for coin operators to perform an invaluable service to mankind and make money at the same time by providing condoms and condom dispensers.

One of the earliest known condoms used was by pre-literate South American native women who would snip off the end of an okra-like seed pod and use it for insertion. Then there was the legendary King Minos of Crete who allegedly used goat bladder to prevent passing on "scorpions and snakes" to the woman he loved. Hopefully operators will best be able to relate to one Mrs. Phillips of eighteenth century London. Mrs. Phillips advertised her sheep gut prophylactics, acquired a fortune, and retired.

On through the years, men and women have used their powers of creative invention to devise better and better methods of birth control. Condoms, though developed for that purpose but left in the wake of more modern means, now are being revived as one of the most effective ways of preventing AIDS.

Coin-operated condom dispensers have been around for a long time but until now have not been perceived by the general public as much more than vendors of gags and novelties.

Accompanying public awareness of AIDS has been a new breed of manufacturers and suppliers of coin-op condom dispensers. There are at least fifteen different dispensers ready to be placed on location; each unique but sharing some common characteristics.

Generally, each of the units reviewed for this article was of the "pack-pusher" design. Individual product hoppers with two columns are placed vertically in a wall-mounted enclosure and tab-locked into place. Prophylactics are easily dropped from the top one upon another until the columns are filled. Weights (about one ounce) are then placed on top of the uppermost product of each column. The hoppers are generally two-columned to allow left to right action for the coin-mechanism. As this totally mechanical coin-mechanism rotates or slides (depending on design) a vend/close assembly (V/C) allows the product to drop to the retrieval pan while locking the last column side used and repositioning to cause the next vend to drop from the second column of the hopper. Thus the dispenser evenly vends product left to right until inventory is depleted. Most units include a mechanical lock-out that prevents coin insert manipulation of the coin-mech when no prophylactics remain within the hopper.

Operators new to condom dispensers will find that accompanying a viable increase in revenue will be an additional increase in route vehicle tools. Installation will require a template of the back wall of the dispenser outlining all mounting holes. Some manufacturers provide a template with each unit but if yours doesn't, make one yourself that

outlines ALL holes provided. Dependent upon the positioning of your dispenser at each individual location, some of the holes provided may have nothing secure to affix to, so take advantage of any mount hole provided or drill a new hole where the head of the mount bolt will not interfere with the action of the dispenser or inhibit its serviceability. The operator will need a drill on hand, preferably cordless, and sufficient drill bits to penetrate wood or steel studs or masonry walls.

Dispensers vary as to their access panels or front enclosure. Some have hinged doors from left or right, others hinge down, and still others require the complete removal of the front panel to load product. If your locations are uniform in design you will have no trouble deciding which loading manner suits you best. If you are unsure of any obstacles which might block your opening the dispenser, you might opt for a unit requiring total front removal. Toilet stalls, urinals, plumbing, towel dispensers, vanity enclosures, and soap dispensers can all provide a hindrance in even the largest restroom.

Capacity is another feature to be conscious of. Dependent upon manufacturer, hoppers will hold anywhere from 60 to 144 prophylactics. Dispenser heights range from 26 to 31 inches. Using an average ceiling height of seven feet, you should be able to position the tallest of dispensers and still provide ease of stocking and customer retrieval of the product. Where unusual height restrictions exist, a shorter unit may be more appropriate with a double or even triple hopper to lessen operator visits

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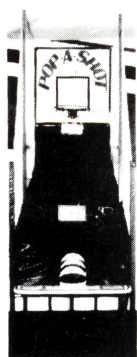
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Basketball Excitement For All Ages!

Condom dispenser security varies with each design from single cam-lock to a cam-lock and padlock combination. Because most dispenser cash boxes will hold a large quantity of quarters (as many as 600 per hopper) operators need to be attentive to the locking features of the dispenser purchased. Enclosures are available in 12-gauge steel and lighter. Though weight is a factor in installation (25-45 lbs.) it only takes one pry bar to remove the overhead you saved on an easy installation!

Condoms presently vend for a average of 50-cents per single unit. In these inflationary times it would not be unseemly for the price to increase to 75-cents or even one dollar per unit. Also, the particular brand dispensed may change the price originally intended. For this reason it's wise to choose a dispenser with an adjustable coin mechanism. Some models can be changed on location to increased quarter increments. Others must be returned to the manufacturer for refitting or an entirely new mechanism must be purchased. Price replacement coin mechs before you buy any dispenser. A higher initial cost may outweigh total replacement costs!

Once an operator has shopped for ease of installation, dependability of operation, capacity, security, and price modification, appearance should be addressed. Condom dispensers are no longer the furniture found in the rear of sleazy bars. They are rapidly becoming expected in hotels, nightclubs, restaurants, spas, college dormitories, and military bases. The majority of operators I spoke with inform me that their highest revenue is pulled from dispensers located in ladies restrooms. Philadelphia Gynecologist Dr. Anthony Matteo tells me that condoms are the "only thing they (patients) are at ease with." Like others in his field he informs his patients that condoms are presently the only preventative measure against AIDS besides abstinence. When asked if his patients believe that it is the man's obligation to provide the condom, he stated, "They 'feel that way but they know they can only depend on themselves." The traditional "sterile"

white package may not be enough to stimulate the interest of trendy "hotspots." Remember, the sexually active age group engaging in intercourse with multiple partners is 18-35. The choicest locations will be where this group "hangs out." Condom dispensers are available in a range of designs from engaging floral designs and pleasant silk-screened covers to hot, bold colors, sometimes the package helps sell the product also!

One last, but by far not the least, concern in selecting a dispenser should be the product. Too many of the dispensers manufactured are constructed to hold and vend a particular prophylactic package. Albeit, this is understandable since the real money is in the condom sale. Operators may be forced to form an allegiance to a particular manufacturer who provides the only condom package the individual dispenser will facilitate. A few manufacturers will re-fit your hopper columns to vend the condom you specify, however, if you wish to consistently shop price for your inventory you may have to resign yourself to a limited number of suppliers.

Death is a cold subject and strikes fear in the hearts of many. For the present, AIDS is here to stay and hopefully sex is here to stay as well. While some may wish to view coin-operated condom dispensers as an invaluable service to society, the bottom line is in the cash boxes soon to be filling across America. In this vein the operator must be a wise shopper. AIDS is expected to be prevalent into the year 2000 so what you purchase today should incorporate all the features you need to maintain your route and grow.

New blood to overcome bad blood. It's got a collection-bag jingle to it!

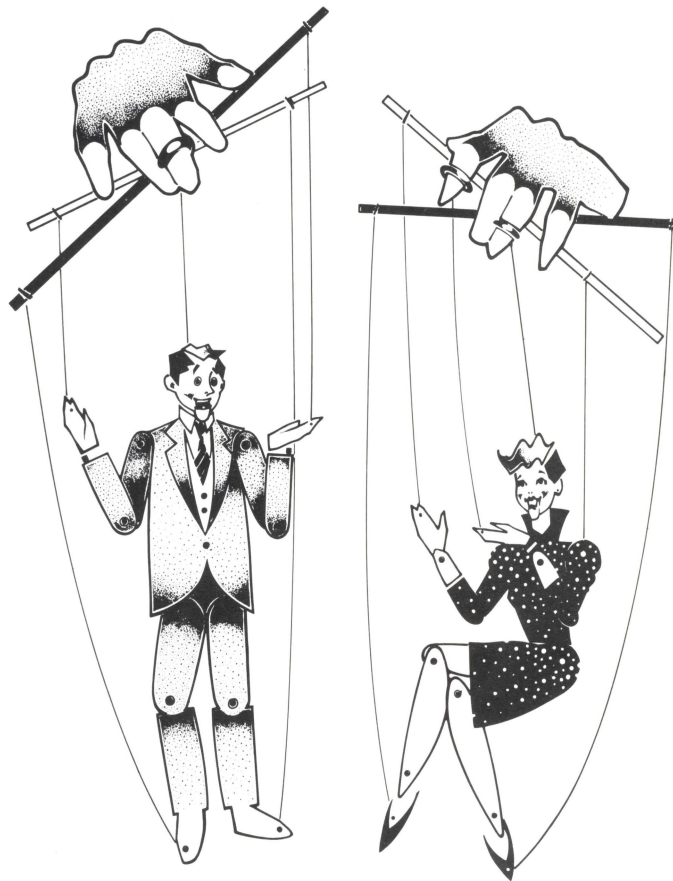
PROGRAMMING CONDOM MACHINES!

The use and availability of condoms and condom dispensers is a serious business. But let's face it, even the most grave subjects occasionally deserve a little humorous look and Play Meter's former editor/advertising manager has taken a light-hearted look at a sober subject.

Because of the considerable media attention focused on AIDS and how condoms can stop the spread of this dreaded disease, operators are finding an extraordinarily strong market for condom vending machines. The condom lost its allure when people started discovering other forms of birth control.

In the past, the only locations where operators could place their condom vending machines were in men's rest rooms of some of the sleazier bars.

But, because of all the media attention, more and more locations are opening up for operators to place condom vending machines. Some of these new types of locations include: women's restrooms, beauty salons, hotel and motel lobbies, florists, bakeries, post offices, grocery stores, and, of course, shopping malls (usually near the ladies intimate apparel section in the large department stores). And I know we are anxiously



By David Pierson

the machine dispensed. And, probably they were right. After all, back then no one even talked about such things, even fewer people would admit using them, and no one but no one would have requested a particular brand!

However, as the the customer base becomes more educated, condom manufacturers are developing different types of condoms and vending machine manufacturers are busily designing multi-channel condom vending machines especially for the discriminating condom buyer.

awaiting for the big three fast foods to offer their own variations: McCondom, Whopper, and the hot and juicy.

But, while operators across the country are reporting huge profits from vending condoms, they maintain that operators must market their condoms in very much the same way they program their jukeboxes or fill their cigarette machines. They need to know the clientele and program...er, provide the brands accordingly.

Regrettably, most operators still remember the one-brand dispensers of their youth and are thinking only along those lines. These vending machines did not inform the buyer which brand of condoms he (or she) was buying. And the assumption here was that the customer would take whatever

So to maximize your condom vending profits, you now have to pay attention to the demographic appeal of each brand and type of condom. Spend time at each location sizing up the customers. Of course, you run the possibility of being known as a nut, but what the heck, at least you'll know who goes there.

Here, therefore, is a short breakdown of what you need to know to maximize profits:

Basically, there are four different types of condoms. They are (1) ultra-thin, (2) ribbed, (3) double-bagged, and (4) padded. Obviously, not all these condom types are acceptable in every location. For instance, the ultra-thin condoms sell much better in men's rooms than they do in women's restrooms. In fact, women's restrooms and beauty salons are extremely good markets for the double-bagged condoms. Again, this just shows the kinds of market subtleties today's operator has to keep in mind when vending condoms.

All four of these basic condom types are available with and without a spermicide. They are also available in several colors. Among the most common colors are red, black, white, flesh, transparent, and yellow. A new condom company, targeting the woman consumer, has just come out with a new floral print design that is available in pink and lavender. But it doesn't have to end there--the sky's the limit!

What then is the best location for each condom type?

According to a poll of operators across the country, here is a breakdown of where each condom type sells best. But remember do not rely only on this survey for marketing your condoms. After all, each location is different. You should use this only as a guide, a starting point to help you more accurately program your condom vending machines.

ULTRA-THIN/NON-SPERMICIDAL

Place ultra-thin/non-spermicidal condoms in men-only locations, like restrooms and auto parts stores. Sensitiveness is a key element in most men's condom choices.

However, most women, when they purchase condoms, are not concerned with the sensitiveness of the condom. This is not to insinuate that women are insensitive to men's feelings, only that it does not apparently figure into their buying decisions.

Caution: Avoid placing ultra-thin/non-spermicidal condoms in locations frequented by both men and women--at the same time--like movie theaters and pizza parlors. Several operators have reported that when a couple purchases a condom together, if the advertised type is ultra-thin/non-spermicidal, the woman may object, saying the man should forsake some of the sensation for more protection.

This could very easily turn into a public argument where the couple argues over each other's feelings for the other. This usually results, they report, with one or the other or both parties storming out of the location--even before buying the pizza, and that's when the problem begins. It doesn't take too many instances like this before the location owner attributes

his declining revenue to the condom vending machine and demands the machine be removed immediately.

RIBBED/NON-SPERMICIDAL

Of all the condom types, ribbed/non-spermicidals present the most difficult marketing problems. But, as may be expected, they also offer some of the greatest profitability.

Ribbed condoms are preferred by adults over 30 with less than a four-year college education. Bowling alleys and laundromats, therefore, are prime locations for ribbed/spermicidals since these locations appeal to that particular demographic market.

More than any other condom type, ribbed/non-spermicidal condoms are the result of impulse buying; so the placement of your condom vending machine is very important. In a laundromat, place the machine near the washers because the customer now has 45 minutes to an hour of idle time. Placing your condom vending machine by the dryer is unwise because the customer is ready to leave, probably for the bowling alley.

In the bowling alley, place your condom vending machine by the checkout desk. Also select colors that appeal to women because, contrary to popular opinion, women, not men are the major condom purchasers in bowling alleys. While the man is paying for the games the couple bowled, the woman is selecting the condom.

However, do not vend floral print designs to this demographic group. Women over 30 with less than a four-year college education are less influenced by effeminate colors and are more influenced by basic blacks, reds, yellows, and whites.

RIBBED/SPERMICIDALS

Ribbed spermicidals appeal to adults over 30 who have at least a four-year college education. Therefore, prime locations for ribbed/spermicidal condoms include libraries, book stores, and museums.

However, coffee houses, which are frequented by educated adults over 30, may invite trouble for the operator. As one operator said, all it takes is one joker in the bunch to buy a condom and drop it in the coffee pot when no one is looking.

"Nothing hurts a location's sales quicker than if a customer finds a condom in his coffee," said an operator who said a location owner actually tore his machine off the wall after some joker tried this.

DOUBLE-BAGGED/NON-SPERMICIDALS

This condom type has the most clearly-defined market group--young, single women with less than a four-year college education.

This demographic group is more concerned with avoiding pregnancy than avoiding AIDS. (However, they lack the

The SMART CHOICE!

SHOOT TO WIN

2 Game Options:

Shoot with only 5 balls or shoot against time clock.

34" wide with retractable bottom base

DIAMOND MINE

2 Player

New Double Player automatically reloads merchandise

THREE GAME SELECTION PROGRAM:

- (1) Nudge arm half-way across playfield
- (2) Nudge arm all the way across playfield
- (3) Prize arm moves automatically across playfield

4 Player

Three tier merchandise display platform

DIMENSIONS

2 Player Upright

33 1/2" width
33 1/2" length
47" height

4 Player

47" width
47" length
51" height

Trailer Model

33 1/2" width
33 1/2" length
27" height

CLEAN SWEEP

- Three skill game options
- Joystick controlled
- Fully adjustable claws
- Dollar bill acceptor option

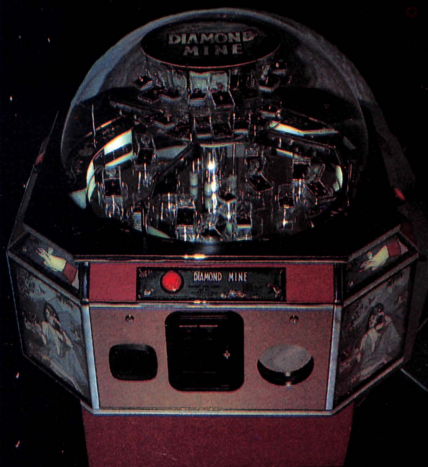
BACKED BY THE SMART GUARANTEE

OPTIONS AVAILABLE FOR ALL GAMES:

- Ticket dispenser
- Trailer mount available
- Bubble gum payout
- Plumb'Bob Tilt option with siren
- Sound system
- Winner light
- Dual coin mechanism
- 90-day limited warranty

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of all types to fit all Claw and
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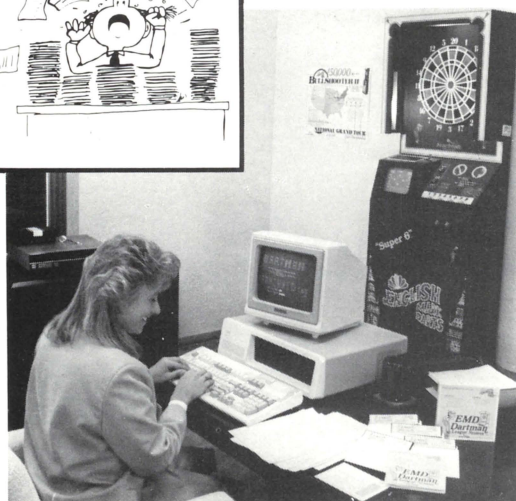
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education to understand what big words like *non-spermicidal* mean).

Even though double-bagged/non-spermicidal condoms appeal to a very clearly-defined market segment, operators report great difficulty in placing vending machines to service these potential customers.

Although the general public has accepted condoms as a perfectly acceptable commodity worthy of being on the open market, parents have not—at least when it concerns their own daughters.

As a result, you have to select locations, such as boutiques and record stores, where parents are not as likely to accompany their daughters.

Of course, it almost goes without saying that floral print or other imaginative designs are a necessity for this group.

PADDED/NON-SPERMICIDALS

Unlike older men, young men are not as concerned with sensitiveness as they are with making a *big* impression. Padded condoms offer this capability. Of course, many can relate to the time when women deceived men by using a padded bra. This is no different and just as deceptive.

Of course, since we're talking about maintaining a very personal image here, young men are not very likely to purchase padded condoms in front of their dates. So, to reach this market segment, place padded/non-spermicidals in the men's room of places where young men try to stretch five dollars on a date. The men's rooms in soda shops, hamburger places, and skating rinks are ideal for reaching this market segment.

PADDED/SPERMICIDAL

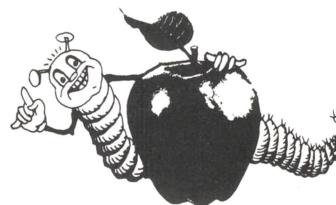
Men over 70 of all educational backgrounds are the target market of this condom type.

This market segment can't feel anything anymore anyhow; so sensitiveness is a moot point. All that matters is that the man can prove he is still able to impress.

Still, because of his somewhat secure financial background, he does not want to take chances of a late-in-life paternity suit.

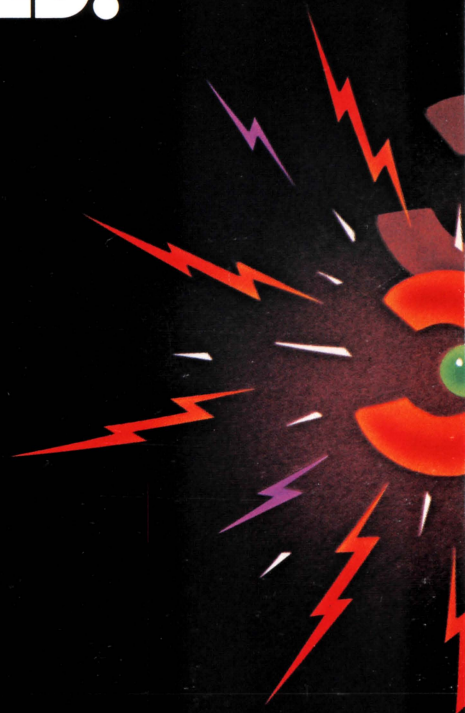
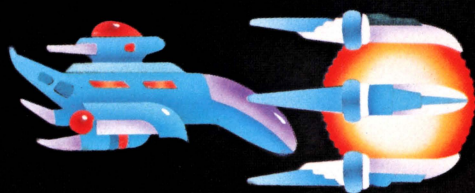
The men's rooms of hotels and fine restaurants are, of course, the best locations for this condom type. Color, by the way, is unimportant at this point.

In conclusion, remember how you missed the boat by investing all your dollars in *Space Zap* when *Pac-Man* was going strong. That's what can happen if you just naturally assume the customer is so hot for condoms that he (or she) will buy whatever you sell. Take a few minutes and program your condom vending machines properly. It will prove well worth your efforts.



**ON THE EDGE
OF A DARK EMPIRE,
YOU EMBARK
ON A MISSION NO ONE
HAS YET SURVIVED.**

WILL YOU?



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The final showdown has begun! At the controls of your powerful R-9 interstellar craft, you maneuver into enemy territory—the monstrous Bydo Empire.

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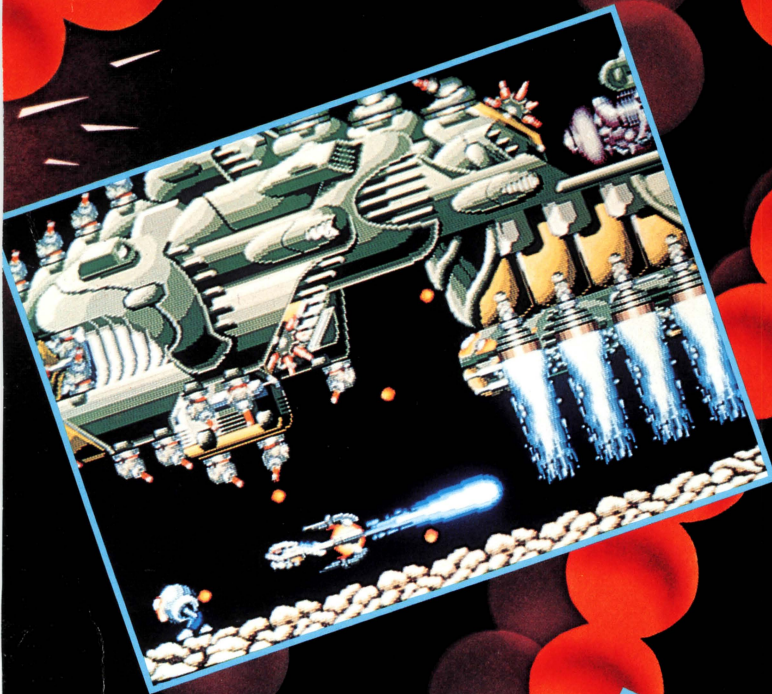
It's a fight to the death against an uncommon cadre of space oddities—gigantic slithering serpents, whirling space bugs and fantastic galactic warships—all bombarding your lone craft amid an exotic cosmic landscape.

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BUYER'S GUIDE

CONDOM MACHINES

The large number of condom machines on the market today can make it difficult to select the right model for a location. Following is a listing of available units with a brief description of each. In most cases condoms can be ordered from the manufacturer; some offer three condoms in a cigarette size pack for use in cigarette vending machines.



Protection Plus

Dimensions: 31 x 11.75 x 3.75 in.

Capacity: 288

Features: Double columns with windows, rounded corners, coin mech for 25 cents to \$1, in silver or pink.

Mfg.: Atec Manufacturing

3926 E. Viking Road

Las Vegas, NV 89121

(702) 435-5456



Model 3050 Condom Dispenser

Dimensions: 26 x 6.5 x 5.5 in.

Capacity: 144

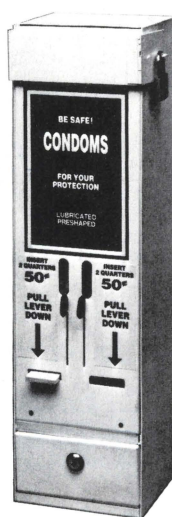
Features: Front-loading panel, out-of-stock indicator, double column, two coin acceptors for 50 cents to \$1, coinbox holds over 600 quarters.

Mfg.: Communidyne

P.O. Box 146674

Chicago, IL 60614

(312) 498-2444



ProVend Condom Machine

Dimensions: 26 x 7.25 x 6 in.

Capacity: 120

Features: Vends from 50 cents to \$1, in white or pink enamel. Also double unit (holds 288) and triple unit (holds 432).

Mfg.: CompuVend Enterprises, Inc.

10340 Glenoaks Blvd.

Pacoima, CA 91331

800/345-1183 or (818) 899-2488



Personal Care Center

Dimensions: 24 x 12.75 x 7.75 in.

Capacity: 144

Features: Holds three different personal care products viewed at display windows. Out-of-product light, slug proof coin mech, vends from 25 cents to \$2. Also Lucky Star cigarette packs.

Mfg.: Entertainment Enterprises Ltd.

25 Hutcheson Place

Lynbrook, NY 11563

800/645-2162 or (516) 593-5050

BUYER'S GUIDE

CONDOM MACHINES



Rainbow Machine

Dimensions: 24 x 12 x 10 in.

Capacity: 110

Features: Two product vending with window display, coin mech for 10 cents to \$2, wall mount or counter placement, and new optional stand.

Mfg.: Exidy, Inc.

5122 Calle Del Sol

Santa Clara, CA 95054

(408) 496-6466



Health Gards Condom Vendor

Dimensions: 25.5 x 7.5 x 6 in.

Capacity: 120

Features: Trim, white, clinical style; double lock security system, 50 cent vend. Also Cigarette Vendor-Pak.

Mfg.: Hospital Specialty Co.

7501 Carnegie Ave.

Cleveland, OH 44103

800/321-9832 or (216) 361-1230.



Model ST-8387

Dimensions: 35 x 10 x 5 in.

Capacity: 270

Features: Triple unit, coin mech for 50 cents to \$1.75, stainless steel with front labels of silver, pink, or gray.

Cigarette packs also available.

Mfg.: L'Appel, Inc.

1804 Johns Drive

Glenview, IL 60025

(312) 998-9500



Health Systems International

Dimensions: 29.5 x 6.75 x 4 in.

Capacity: 165

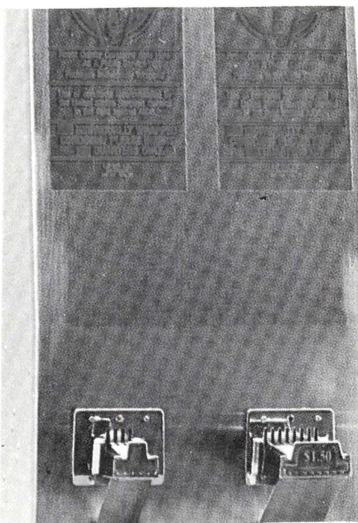
Features: Double column, hinged front door, highly styled graphics, coin mech for 50 cents to \$1, in brushed bronze and tones of red or blue.

Mfg.: Stanley Levin & Associates

510 Sandpiper Lane

Deerfield, IL 60015

(312) 537-5558



The Protectors, Model 2010 Series 2

Dimensions: 25 x 8.5 x 7 in.

Capacity: 88 (condoms), 30 (tampons)

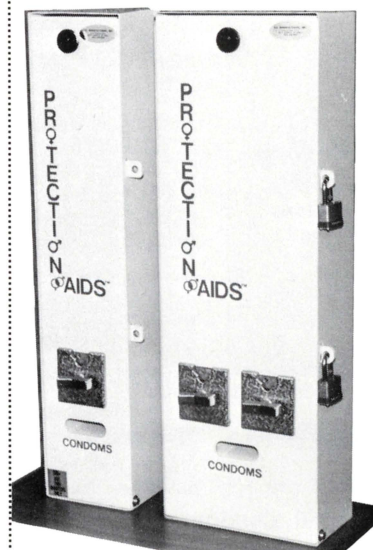
Features: Dual unit holds condoms and tampons. Brushed stainless steel door, coin mech for 25 cents to \$1. Also single vend units.

Mfg.: LJP Enterprises, Inc.

357 27 1/2 Road

Grand Junction, CO 81501

800/443-5358 or (303) 242-9430



Protection Aids

Dimensions: 6.5 x 9.5 x 30.5 in.

Capacity: 288

Features: Gloss white finish, reinforced door, four columns, coin mech for 50 cents (conversion kit extends to \$1).

Mfg.: R.M.V. Sales, Inc.

336 Steubenville Pike

Imperial, PA 15126

(412) 695-2406 or (412) 922-8058

BUYER'S GUIDE

CONDOM MACHINES



PVC Condom Machine

Dimensions: 31 x 8 x 5.75 in. single unit;
31 x 16 x 6 in. double unit.

Capacity: 150 single unit; 300 double unit.

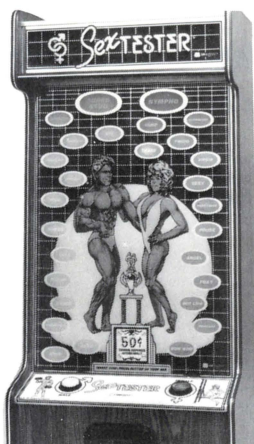
Features: Single or double selection, coin mech for 50 cents to \$1, cash box holds 600 quarters. Also Cigpak condom pack.

Mfg.: PVC (Pro-Vend Products)

4020 Payne Ave

Cleveland, OH 44103

(216) 432-0765



Sex Tester

Dimensions: 74 x 25.25 x 21.5 in.

Capacity: 288

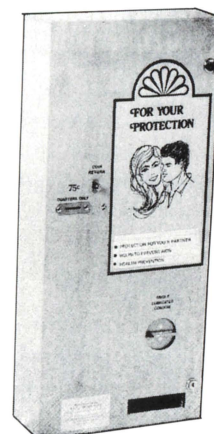
Features: Combined amusement game and condom vending unit in upright cabinet, dual coin mech, adjusts from one to eight coins per play.

Mfg.: SMS Manufacturing Corp.

601 Prospect St.

Lakewood, NJ 08701

800/221-0138 or (201) 370-3030



For Your Protection

Dimensions: 27 x 11 x 4 in.

Capacity: 144

Features: Vends from 50 cents to \$1, all internal coin mech, rolled steel construction.

Mfg.: U.S.T.C.

3118 62nd Ave.

P.O. Box 21234

St. Petersburg, FL 33742

(813) 527-1107



Take Care Center

Dimensions: 25.5 x 7.5 x 6 in.

Capacity: 120

Features: Coin mech for 25 cents to \$1, tasteful point-of-purchase advertising stickers for mirrors, walls, and doors.

Mfg.: Vendom Manufacturing, Inc.

373 N. University Drive

Suite 444

Plantation, FL 33324

800/635-6366 ext. 730

(305) 587-7933

Photos not available:

Photos not available:

Class of 87

Allison Devices

4144 Freemont Ave. N.

Minneapolis, MN 55412

800/223-8620 or (612) 521-9984

Condom Vending Machine

National Sanitary Laboratories

7150 N. Ridgeway

Lincolnwood, IL 60645

(312) 982-1700

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- Accounting
- Budgeting
- Finance
- Human Resource Management
- Law

- Marketing
- Strategic Planning
- Taxation

There also are group assignments where participating operators are given a specific homework "project" to complete during the session. Better yet, each session gives operators an opportunity to learn in a campus environment *and* exchange ideas with fellow operators — a unique learning experience in itself!

Feedback from operators who have successfully completed all — or just a few — of the five sessions has been nothing short of phenomenal! In fact, all attest that they reap many benefits — monetarily and in business "smarts" — when applying what they've learned back home. Those operators successfully completing all five sessions also receive AMOA-Notre Dame continuing education certification.

The AMOA-Notre Dame Executive Development Program is one very important way that AMOA is helping members improve their business skills through one of the greatest training tools ever — continuing education.

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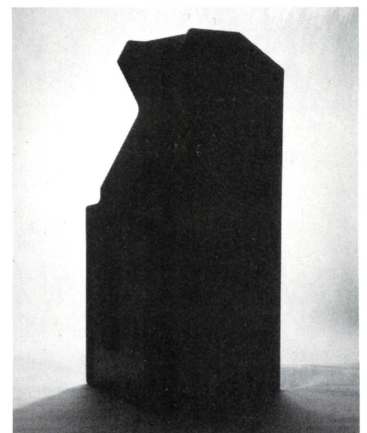
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FEATURE

TOP THREE MERCHANDISE ITEMS DISCUSSED EACH MONTH



By Frank 'The Crank' Seninsky

As I've traveled around the country speaking before state operator associations, operators have asked me for my opinion on the best merchandise items they can use in their cranes. This is not a simple request, for days of research are involved before one can give an accurate listing that applies to 'most regions' of the United States.

For the next few months at least, "Certain Burton" is going to compile merchandise data from operators, manufacturers, and distributors, and come up each month with at least three of the most successful crane items. This 'old bear' is looking out for the operators and won't show any favoritism for suppliers. I feel certain that "Certain Burton" should be taken very seriously indeed....

1) The "Cool Series": features cute animals decked out in sunglasses. Contact: *Rosette Doll Company*, Bala Cynwyd, PA, 800-426-6665 or 215/668-8392.

"Cool Penguin" #01305 6" 6DZ \$16.80/DZ
 "Cool Caterpillar" #04293 5" 6DZ \$21.60/DZ
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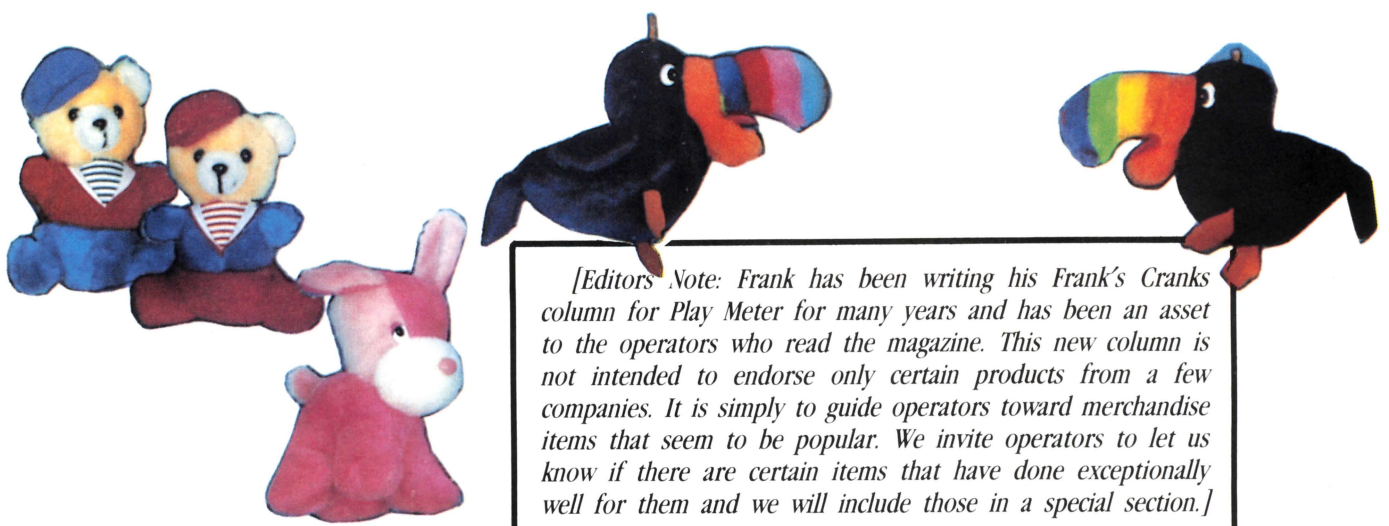
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[Editors Note: Frank has been writing his Frank's Cranks column for Play Meter for many years and has been an asset to the operators who read the magazine. This new column is not intended to endorse only certain products from a few companies. It is simply to guide operators toward merchandise items that seem to be popular. We invite operators to let us know if there are certain items that have done exceptionally well for them and we will include those in a special section.]

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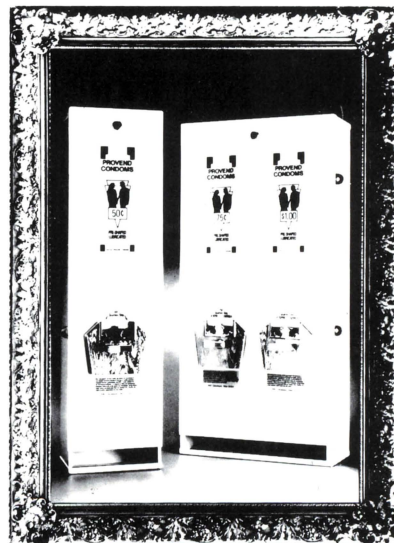
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PLAYERS PICKS

HEALTHY TURN-AROUND DURING SUMMER

by Steve Harris

The summer of '87 reinforced previous trends that indicated a healthy turn-around in the coin-op amusement arena. Though falling short of any game milestones, manufacturers did manage to turn out quite a few surprises that had players forming lines once again. With a heavy emphasis on war and fighting (no cutesy games this summer), manufacturers delivered a host of goodies that, bottom-line, did little more than expand on previous themes.

But while the themes may be familiar, there are several trends that shouldn't be ignored.

One of the most recognizable is the painstaking attention to detail displayed by most current product. Visuals have always been an important part of attracting the players, but today we are witnessing games that are so intricate and graphically realistic, with animation of similar quality, that a wide-range of expressions can be conveyed through the characters. This helps many of the games, especially the one man against the world epics like *Double Dragon*, *Black Tiger*, and the upcoming Capcom blockbuster *Street Fighter*, since both the lead and the opponents have very strong personalities. In many of these games, the facial and body movements are so life-like that a few chuckles usually come when these actions are exaggerated (after all, seeing a nine-foot giant's eyes bulge out when he's greeted with a well-placed kick to the groin is not something experienced everyday). In others, the visual enhancements often add to the total atmosphere of the game, creating moods that before now couldn't be duplicated in a video game.

Another strong point shared by most of today's product is the option of dual player participation, with two (or even three or four) people competing at once, either struggling in a common cause or against one another. This, of course, does more than just help cash box receipts, it helps foster a more humanizing tone to play that gets players to communicate with other people in addition to the game itself. The games that develop a working camaraderie between people add to the fun and excitement of the game and provide a convenient method of doubling collections. It's a nice trend that I hope continues.

Now, with the AMOA convention just around the corner,

many manufacturers are unloading their pre-AMOA booty at this time to prepare other upcoming titles for the glitz and hype of the biggest coin-op show in America. The following reviews are a compilation of the U.S. National Video Game Team's pick-hits from the summer of '87. All the games in the following article are now available or will be in the near future. Each of these titles boast superior play mechanics and offer a wide variety of attractions that appeal to both novice and advance game players. These games are the current "cream of the crop" and are definitely worth looking at. Leading into the AMOA exhibition, these are what the game players will be looking for and the games that they'll be playing.

King of the Road

Always a favorite, driving games continue to remain a staple of the gamer's diet. Supported by the success of recent sensations like *WEC Lemans* and *Out Run*, drivers are still high on the charts and show no signs of falling off.

Bidding for the player's quarters this fall are two new driving contests each taking a distinctively different path. Atari's *APB* (which stands for All Points Bulletin) visits territory that was previously touched by Sente's *Stocker*, although in a much more elaborate cops and robbers setting. Meanwhile, Sega's *Super Hang-On* follows in the footsteps of its namesake, spicing up the traditional head-on road race with swinging curves around blind hills and down steep valleys.

Calling All Cars (Atari's *APB*)

One look at the complex overhead perspective and detailed visual work and you know this is no ordinary driving game. Boasting all of the trademarks that have made recent Atari releases such as *720 Degrees* so entertaining (and profitable), *APB* follows a day in the life of Officer Bob, a fearless cop whose hatred of bad guys (litterbugs, reckless taxis, etc.) is



matched only by his fear of not meeting the quotas posted by his over-weight and over-stressed boss.

The early rounds of *APB* try to get players familiar with the environment of the game as well as the slightly awkward controls. One hand is needed to maneuver the patrol car (with a steering wheel), while another is required to address dual "fire" and "siren" buttons. A demo round helps, but compared to the action of the real game, this phase is very slow.

The basic idea behind *APB* is to apprehend a constant number of criminals for misdemeanor offenses, or by optionally pursuing any one of a number of known felons that require additional skills to overcome.

The layout of the city is very large and, when included with the secret detours that often lead to extra riches, becomes almost too big. It's difficult not to get lost within the city, but repeated play does improve the memorization process (many of the elements of the game remain in identical locations from play to play). The backgrounds are drawn with the usual high-quality Atari is known for, and in many instances add humor to the game. The Atari designers label many locations and streets with titles that only a prude wouldn't laugh at.

Expanding on the humorous aspects of play, *APB* relies on many clichés and works them into the game itself. Since the

boys in blue often frequent donut shops, this food item fulfills a special task while affording extra laughs.

While the visual embellishments are second to none, with color and animation that's bright and vivid, the audio accompaniment remains up to par. Laid back tunes play as the action scrolls from scene to scene and Officer Bob tries to return to the station for a commendation.

Throughout the vibrant graphics, upbeat music, and great game play, *APB* might have problems attracting players to a driving game that is not quite as conventional as *Pole Position*. The rules aren't straightforward, making the driving portion of the game take a back seat to the other aspects of play.

It's a tough call, but *APB* does have everything it takes to be a winner. Certainly advanced players will enjoy the fast-paced storyline and endless scoring incentives as well as the customizing features (power-up stations that award faster speeds, quicker braking, and powerful guns) available. But, for the average gamer with quarter in hand, *APB* may be too much of a good thing. Some of the outstanding features that should receive prominent attention are lost within the rest of surroundings.

APB is a great game. Whether or not it develops a substantial following remains to be seen.

Enhancements Make a Super Game (Sega's *Super Hang-On*)

Sega has become famous for its line of driving games that consistently attract players and bring substantial earnings. Beginning with *Hang-On*, and continuing through last year's mega-hit, *Out Run*, Sega has brought a new look and feel into arcades.

Spicing up its original race games, Sega has produced a fuel-injected sequel to the masterpiece, *Hang-On*. *Super Hang-On* is a game that can more closely be described as *Hang-On* meets *Out Run*, with courses that eliminate "flat tracks" and increase the overall excitement of the race.

Other embellishments include four new player-selected races located and labeled by their continent (such as Africa, America, and the super race-way of Europe). The new courses add tremendous depth to a game that might otherwise have failed to attract the attention of players familiar with the original *Hang-On* game. Each course has its own set of hairpin turns and opposing racers, with a different finale greeting experienced players at each end goal. *Super Hang-On* also borrows another feature from *Out Run* that greatly enhances the backdrop for the action. Preceding actual play, a menu of four catchy musical tracks is served up, with the player selecting his favorite. Another nice touch from Sega that keeps the game interactive and the player involved.

The most notable difference separating *Super Hang-On* from its predecessor, however, is the appearance of a special "turbo" button located on the left handlebar grip. The turbo feature adds a whole new dimension to play, allowing super fast speeds of up to 324 mph. The advantages of the faster speed are



In Arcades, No One Can Hear You Scream...

Manufacturers are finally beginning to recognize a popular following that exists in today's game playing public. The admiration of horror movies among kids who are also familiar with coin-op amusements is clearly evident. Although there have been steps in the right direction (witness *Monster Bash*), no one has really gone all the way and developed a game with all the screams (and all the laughs) these movies so easily generate.

Strange Name, Strange Game, Big Bucks (Bally/Midway *Xenophobe*)

One of the more original entries to come along in this genre of gaming is a new machine courtesy of Bally/Midway. Although its odd title, *Xenophobe*, may conjure up visions of equally off-beat game play, it is in reality one of the better items to come from the coin-op powerhouse in some time.

Xenophobe is unique on several levels, with each special designs to increase the play value of a basically straightforward game and enhance the collection potential as well. Three separate stations await up to a trio of gamers playing simultaneously, with a cabinet design that borrows heavily from earlier Bally efforts. The game play of *Xenophobe* is separated into three distinct levels, each taking a one-third proportional share of a single monitor. Players choose one of several characters they wish to portray, ranging from the macho super hero, to the comical half-man/half-duck, Dr. Quack, among others.

After choosing an appropriate character, the game begins with the halls of a number of space stations that have been infested with dangerous alien life forms. Armed with a weapon, the player must guide his figure through a progression of frames which make up the complete passage-way (no scrolling except when the extreme left or right of the screen is reached). Players can work together to bring order, or may work independently (or possibly get separated and completely lost within the labyrinth of halls). When a sufficient number of slimey beasties have been exterminated, the player moves to a transportation chamber and beams off to bonus points and additional dangers to be found in the next level of play.

Xenophobe does have detailed graphics which allows for some very enjoyable monster-meets-man routines. The expression of the lead characters being piloted through the monster mazes are enough to make your side split in some instances. Although the rest of the backdrops for the game are fairly simple, the environment for the majority of action is well drawn and filled with every type of creature imaginable, with great attention to detail.

Bally has also done a good job of incorporating the three-player simultaneous play option into the game itself, providing a working camaraderie between players that really

offset to some extent, however, by the shorter response time available to avoid obstacles and other cyclists, as well as increasing the hazards around turns and over hills.

Super Hang-On is a definite upgrade of the original ride-on classic. Although on the surface you might see little more than a candy-coated copy of earlier Sega driving games, *Super Hang-On* is executed to near perfection. The detailed visuals, and the fast-paced driving action blend well with other enhancements to produce a definitive game of unparalleled excitement.

If it were any other genre of games one might be tempted to pass up *Super Hang-On* for previous driving titles that continue to earn well. But until driving games fall by the wayside, *Super Hang-On*, and any future additions to this family, will generally be a safe bet.

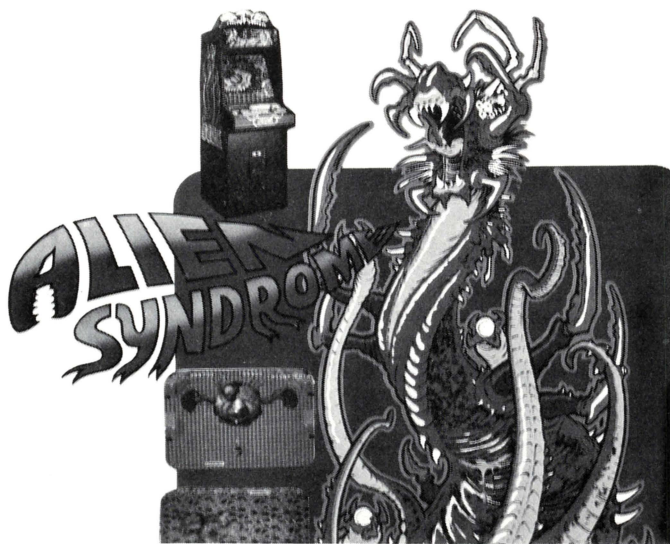
Also, Sega has once again offered a product in multiple formats; this time *Super Hang-On* is being packaged in both upright and ride-on simulators cabinets. While the intention of providing a ride-on variation is, of course, to increase the playing realism and to stimulate play, the game play is relatively the same. If you already have a Sega driving simulator you might want to stick with the standard upright model, otherwise the ride-on (which is somewhat smaller than previous Sega simulators) is worth considering.

Whatever the format, *Super Hang-On* is a thrill-a-second driving block buster guaranteed to please. Sega has taken the best of the best and piled them into a game of superior quality. A definite winner!

hasn't been experienced since Atari's *Gauntlet*. *Xenophobe* is a well executed and very fun portrayal of the Orkin man of the 22nd century. Definitely worth a look.

Alien Syndrome

On the other end of the scale, however, there can be found Sega's *Alien Syndrome*, one of the company's few excursions outside the driving genre. Where *Xenophobe* caters more to the player who wants some casual video game entertainment, *Alien Syndrome* is a surrealistic nightmare filled with twisted creatures and surroundings that are unlike anything ever before seen in a video game.



Apparently such visuals are appealing, since players are finding the game to be one of the better summer offerings to find its way into arcades and onto the street. It's a brutal one man (or two) against an army of unsettling blobs and horrifying main creatures that bring a strange excitement to play.

There are several customizing incentives scattered about each of the six playfields (none of which resembles another) that power-up the player's weapons or firepower, and make the task of eliminating the monsters and completing the rescue of captured comrades easier. These power-ups add a new dimension to the play as they're introduced from round to round.

Alien Syndrome does an excellent job of balancing the action between search and destroy, and the highly detailed creatures protecting the escape route on each of the alien spaceships are so brilliantly rendered, you'll often find crowds gathered around the machines.

Alien Syndrome is a very good players' game and does attract casual interest as well. There is a two-player cooperative function that, ideally, will increase the earnings potential of the game, but even without the option, *Alien Syndrome* still remains a very strong creature killing classic. Expect to see interest in this title stay high with all types of players in the months to come.



Double Dragon

Take *Renegade*, a sleeper game of last year with some of the most hard hitting fight sequences ever seen in a video game, toss in a scrolling perspective with a search and destroy adventure scenario, and add the capability for simultaneous two-player interactivity and you have Taito's *Double Dragon*. More than just a sequel, *Double Dragon* is an extension of *Renegade* that is guaranteed to have players forming lines to play.

Boasting one of the most original storylines ever, *Double Dragon* challenges players to battle an endless line of thugs and muscle-bound villains in search of his kidnapped girlfriend. Real original, huh?

Actually, *Double Dragon* does present some truly original play themes, coupled with fantastic graphics and superior audio accompaniment that has yet to be found in similar games. In fact, the graphics themselves make *Double Dragon* a real attraction that can benefit an entire location.

One of the better aspects of *Double Dragon* are the ever increasing assortment of bad guys intent on doing away with the player. These guys need to be pounded again and again before they bite the dust, and "boss" villains at the end of specific points require even more kicks and jobs before they go down. Some of the opponents carry weapons such as whips, baseball bats, knives, etc. that can also be picked up by the player for additional offensive capabilities. There are occasionally obstacles within the background that come to life to further complicate the player's quest.

Double Dragon is a winner by any sense of the name and is well on its way to becoming the hit of the year. While the play mechanics are fairly simple, they do afford a wide range

of movement that players will readily embrace. The animation of both the background and foreground characters is incredible, with lifelike fighting moves played out with the touch of a button. *Double Dragon* is the type of game that a player will receive complete satisfaction from, and, in turn, so will the operator who owns it!

1943

The war rages on in this fantastic follow-up to one of the perennial shoot-em-up favorites of 1985. Capcom's original *1942* didn't boast any tremendous advantages in graphics or sound, but it did have solid game play built around a specific theme that has probably generated the most slide-and-shoot attractions since *Galaga*.

1943 expands upon its original namesake by spicing up the graphics, inserting more attractive music and animated intermissions between phases, as well as providing dual playing options that allow two gamers to play simultaneously. While the game play itself has changed a bit, (the game is now based on energy rather than "hits" to make the game more playable for casual gamers), the basic theme is still there, with head-to-head conflicts above the Atlantic. The designers of the game have pumped it full of new incentives that make it play like an entirely new machine.

The action is structured on an escalating scale of battles set at sea and in the air. Various airborne targets appear to spit fire back at the player, decreasing a dwindling energy supply. When a main convoy (the climax of each round) of ships or transport planes appear, the player is required to strike a certain adjustable percentage of the enemy craft. Until that quota is met, the battle continues until the island of Midway is undefeated.

Along the way, the player is challenged to acquire new weapons and additional energy whenever certain planes are destroyed. These can retain weapons already in use (the player is allowed only one power up at a time) or award additional bonus points (in the form of cows, fruit, and other strange objects).

The two-player mode does increase the overall enjoyment of the game, and the cooperative nature of this game is particularly enjoyable. The game play moves by at a quick pace and is complimented by some very detailed graphics that heighten the appeal of the game and an audio accompaniment that leaves *1942* far behind.

Although I'd be echoing the sentiments of many operators by saying that *1943* would have been a tremendous hit as a conversion kit. But, even in its present dedicated form, *1943* is still a good example of how simple play mechanics can make a great game. A title worth investigating.

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Black Tiger

There is a game by Romstar, being marketed as a kit, that could well have made a big splash as a dedicated (we'll have to wait for *Top Speed* to see what Romstar can give us in dedicated fare). *Black Tiger* returns to the scenarios that have been pioneered and refined by well-known money-makers like *Ghosts & Goblins* and *Rygar*. It fulfills every department with fast-paced action, very vivid graphics, and sound effects that are definitely up to par with any of the games previously mentioned. But the real treat a player gets from playing *Black Tiger* is the atmosphere and sense of adventure it creates. It combines all the proven concepts from a dozen games and throws them together in a special way to produce one of the best kits of the summer!

Portraying a brave warrior, players must search caves and passageway riddled with secret objects, treasure, wise men, and, of course, your usual serving of monsters, dragons, and ghouls. At his disposal are knives and a mace which, at the onset of a game, seem to make the player's character invincible. However, as play progresses past the first phase, the difficulty of the game, as well as the depth of play, become apparent.

Searching for a lost princess (when will they finally be original and have players seek out an old '65 Mustang?), the player must thwart off a constantly growing cast of evil monsters and animate objects while retrieving "zenny coins" and consulting with wise men.

The zenny coins and wise men have a special connection that allows the player to buy additional weapons and armor from the mystics with the currency that is accumulated. This is an integral part of play that also expands the scope of the melee and helps break up the action in a useful manner.

Everything in *Black Tiger* is of superb quality! The adventure that the game leads players to is well worth the time and money invested (the game ends but it is by no means easy). There are continue features that allow the player to pick up from where he previously left off, and this feature will probably be used a lot since completing the game's eight levels finishes the game. *Black Tiger* is a great game all the way around, relying on its popular theme and impressive execution to attract players. A highly recommended kit that lives up to the high standards that Romstar is known for.

Rad Action

A new kid on the block, World Games, has already managed to bring a number of games to the market with their unconventional "direct to operator" approach. Seeking to produce a higher profile for their company and their products, World Games will soon be using a distributor network to funnel new product into locations, leading off with a UPL-licensed kit entitled *Rad Action*.

First impressions of *Rad Action* may leave you unconvinced that the story of a little red character wandering through mazes is nothing more than another average "cutesy" game. While

first impressions are usually the most revealing, they do not do justice to a game filled with a depth of play that rivals other kits on the market and is supported by graphics and sound that is second to none.

Rad Action, unfortunately, suffers from a boring opening sequence that has turned some types of players off. With certain revisions in the game program expected, however, *Rad Action* is on its way to becoming the truly exceptional game that it is!

Beyond the first round, *Rad Action* dishes up over a dozen levels of highly detailed characters that, when combined with the equally interactive backgrounds, make the entire game a surprise around every turn.

Breaking up the different rounds of play are bonus screens that can be exited or attempted for bonus points as well as bonus weapons which are absolutely necessary in the later stages. In addition to the throwing stars the game awards from round one, fire balls, bombs, and boomerangs can be gathered up. Weapon select is made by way of the joystick while dual buttons provide jump and shoot options.

Rad Action gives total control over the game to the player by making more than one pathway available--with each pathway leading to a distinctly different ending and future screen. It's a great feature that has never really found its way into a game before.

Rad Action also gives more flexibility at the beginning of each game by offering three different beginning points from where to enter the caves (each proportionately harder). Still another nice touch that is sure to be applauded by all types of players.

The game play itself is what elevates *Rad Action* above similar titles that you might be tempted to compare with. The graphics and music of *Rad Action* rival (and are in fact better in some instances) that of many of his higher priced dedicated cousins.

Beyond the opening screens, *Rad Action* is a surprise find that may well turn out to be the sleeper kit of the season! It has been expertly crafted to play in a very even manner that spreads the action and adventure around evenly and has a very good progression of difficulty. *Rad Action* is the type of game that anyone could enjoy, its cute characters and bright colors are sure to attract younger players, while the high level of strategy and good old combat make it a winner with advanced player as well. As it stands, *Rad Action* is a good title, that with proper changes, would be a blockbuster! A great introductory piece for World Games who we will hopefully be seeing more of!

That rounds out the U.S. National Video Game Team's "summer hits" selection for 1987. Give these titles a second look to see if they fit your locations.

Look for a special AMOA introduction to what the U.S. National Video Game Team is looking forward to in the coming seasons. Advance pickings look sharp, especially Capcom's two-player *Street Fighter* (*Karate Champ* updated), Nintendo's first dedicated in almost two years, *R-Type*, as well as a slew of other video and pin games. Whatever the weather may be, these new titles are hot! See ya next time!

CASH CONVERSION PERIOD

...the path to a better cash flow

By Bryan E. Milling

An efficient cash flow remains a primary objective of financial management in any business. Most businessmen employ the average collection period calculation to gauge that efficiency. That management tool measures the average length of time each sales dollar remains in the form of an account receivable before collection converts it into cash.

Thus, reducing a firm's average collection period from 45 days to 30 days indicates a more rapid conversion of the firm's accounts receivable into cash, and hence, a more efficient cash flow.

However, efficient cash flow management calls for a broader perspective than that provided by the average collection period calculation. Indeed, the management effort should concentrate on the length of the *cash conversion period* in a business.

The cash conversion period measures the average time lapse between each customer's purchase decision, and the date payment for that purchase becomes cash in your bank account.

The chart below summarizes all of the major activities that enter into the cash conversion period. The cumulative time necessary to complete those activities measures the length of that period.

The specific procedures necessary to complete each activity exceed our concern. However, we can review some considerations associated with each activity that directly influence the length of the cash conversion period in a business.

Again, referring to the chart, the

customer's purchase decision marks the beginning of the cash conversion period. Disregarding your marketing effort, you can't influence the speed of the decision process. However, you can facilitate the communication of that decision-i.e. the purchase order--to your business.

That objective eliminates the postal system as the sole means for communication. In the best

circumstances, that facility extends your cash conversion period from one to three days. In normal circumstances, the extension may be even longer.

Electronic communication--telephone, date-phone, or xerographic transmission--overcomes the deficiencies in the postal system. Indeed, such communication media may cut from one to seven days off of the cash conversion period.

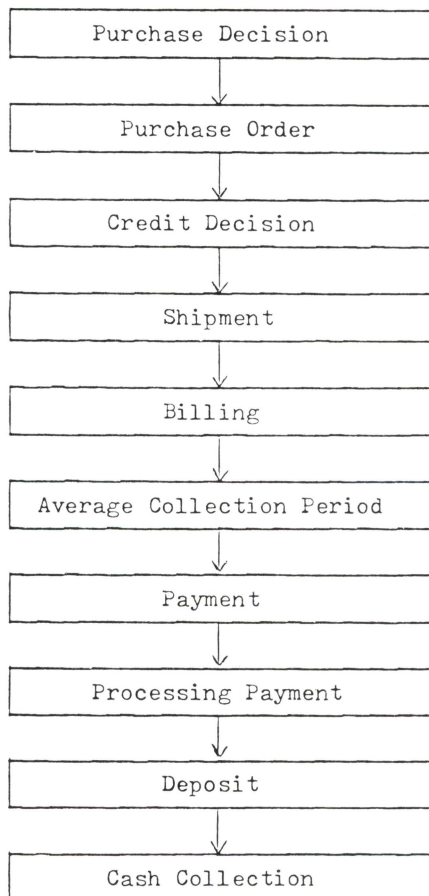
Moreover, electronic communication improves your service capability. The more rapidly you receive an order, the more rapidly that order becomes a sale. The customer receives quicker delivery, and you receive a better cash flow. Both parties benefit.

After receiving the purchase order, however communicated, the administrative structure in your business should facilitate rapid completion of the sale. You should reduce the paperwork required to complete that task, and encourage the smooth flow of that required through the administrative structure.

Typically, the credit decision remains the major administrative stumbling block. Certainly, no shipment should proceed without proper approval of the customer's credit worthiness. However, the credit decision process should not become a leisurely affair.

Pre-approved credit lines, at least for significant customers, eliminates that potential delay. If such lines prove impractical, however, recognize that each day credit analysis delays approval of a sale lengthens your cash conversion

CASH CONVERSION PERIOD



period and hurts your cash flow.

Of course, expeditious shipment should follow a positive credit decision. That calls for a well organized shipping department that meshes well with the other elements in your administrative structure.

Following shipment, you must issue an invoice to complete the sale. Two significant considerations make prompt invoicing an important activity in the cash conversion period.

First, few purchasers pay for merchandise prior to receipt of the invoice that evidences the sale. Indeed, the invoice typically serves as the trigger for the accounting process that leads to proper payment.

Second, the invoice issue date usually initiates the period that defines the seller's designated terms for payment.

Thus, should you require payment thirty days from the date of the invoice, but fail to invoice for seven days after shipment, you actually allow the customer thirty-seven days for payment.

The invoice preparation lengthens your cash conversion period by seven days. That, in turn, commits further injury to your cash flow.

Of course, the average collection period remains a significant fraction of the total cash conversion period. Consequently, adopting the larger perspective for cash flow management does not diminish the significance of the traditional criteria at all.

Indeed, the significance of the average collection period as a major element in the cash conversion period reemphasizes the need for a competent credit and collection effort. That means that you should not accept a deterioration in the quality of your analysis in the quest for a quick credit decision.

Certainly, more thorough research into a customer's questionable credit history may lengthen the cash conversion period. But that may be more preferable than a large increase in bad debt write-offs.

Indeed, you must seek a balance

between the principles that underlie sound credit judgment, and the desire for an efficient cash flow.

Of course, you should complement the decision that approves the sale with a collection effort that encourages payment within your designated terms. Even good customers need an occasional reminder that you expect prompt payment.

Perhaps surprisingly, your concern with the collection of your accounts receivable should proceed beyond the natural desire for prompt payment. Indeed, the *method* a customer utilizes to remit payment also affects your cash conversion period.

Naturally, the most common payment method relies on the postal system. On the date the payment is due, the customer mails a check to your office.

The system that delays delivery of a purchase order provides the same treatment for the payment. Again that delay extends your cash conversion period.

You may gain some improvement by

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using a post office box for your business address. In some cities that decision reduces mail delivery time by one to three days, compared to the service provided to your physical facility.

Alternatively, you might benefit from the use of a "lockbox" for collections. A lockbox is nothing more than a post office box controlled by your bank. Your customers mail payments to the box address. Then, your bank, as a fee paid service, collects the payments and deposits them directly to your account.

Your accounting system subsequently processes a photocopy of the customer's check, accompanied by the relevant remittance advice. Should you employ a lockbox, your accounting suffers the delays, not your cash conversion period.

The lockbox system is the most widely used system for accelerating collections. Of course, you must compare the bank's fee for that service against the benefits that accrue from a shorter cash conversion period. In many circumstances the profit potential held in a more rapid

cash flow can make the cost of the lockbox service insignificant.

The lockbox system remains impractical for many businesses. However, you can learn a lesson from that system that still can reduce your cash conversion period. That is, deposit all significant collections as soon as possible after receipt. The accounting process that records the payments should not delay that deposit.

Certainly, we are not disputing the need for sound bookkeeping procedures. However, those procedures can rely on remittance advice or photocopies of the customer payments. The actual check is unnecessary.

The need for prompt deposit procedures arises from the nature of the banking system. Depositing a customer's check does not mark the end of the cash conversion period. In the strict sense, that check does not become cash available for your business until it "clears." It clears when your customer's bank remits the actual funds to your

account through the electronic network that unites the banking system.

In the interim, a period that may extend from two to ten days, the deposit falls into the category of "uncollected funds." At the bank's discretion, uncollected funds may be unavailable for use in your business. In such instances, the clearing time becomes a significant addition to your cash conversion period.

Of course, you can't influence the clearing time associated with a customer's check. However, you shouldn't allow internal processing procedures to hinder the timely deposit of all material payments.

Indeed, that emphasizes the whole purpose of this discussion. That is, you should recognize the elements that enter into the cash conversion period, and exert the necessary effort to reduce that period.

A shorter cash conversion period means a better cash flow. That improvement ultimately translates into higher earnings for your business.

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TAX TIPS

by Irving L. Blackman

LEAVE IT TO THE IRS TO BUILD A BETTER TAX TRAP... ...AND WAYS FOR YOU TO BITE BACK.

NEW LAW TAKES BITE OUT OF BUSINESS MEALS AND ENTERTAINMENT

Do you remember the hullabaloo about the "three-martini-lunch?" Well, now only 24 of your business martinis can be deducted. This is the ridiculous new rule: Only 80 percent of business meals and entertainment expenses can be deducted. Also, the new law knocks out deductions for meals that (1) are lavish and extravagant under the circumstances, or (2) the taxpayer (or one of his employees) is not present when the food or beverages are served. Sorry, but the rule extends to meals you eat alone while traveling away from home or business.

You can still enjoy a 100 percent deduction under six specific exceptions:

1. Entertainment and meal expenses are reimbursed to an employee (then the employer gets hit with the 80 percent rule);
2. Traditional employer-provided recreational expenses for employees (for example, a company Christmas party);
3. Meals excludable from employee's gross income as *de minimis* fringe benefits (includes a company cafeteria);
4. Entertainment and meal expenses fully taxed as compensation;
5. Items sold to the public or furnished to the public as samples or for promotion; and
6. Cost of meals in 1987 and 1988 (if not separately stated) that are provided as an integral part of a *qualified banquet meeting*.

And you won't like this definition of a qualified banquet meeting: a convention, seminar, annual meeting or similar business meeting if (a) the program included the meal, the cost of which is not separately stated; (b) more than 50 percent of the participants are away from home; (c) there are at least 40 attendees; and (d) the meal event includes a speaker.

Just to make sure you don't try to play games, the 80 percent rule will be broadly applied covering tips, parking taxes, cover charges, tickets and any other expense connected to the meal or entertainment activity.

Substantiation remains a must. The rule is simple--no records, no deductions. The IRS has been instructed to issue stricter substantiation requirements for business meals, except that the present-law rule requiring receipts only for expenses in excess of \$25 is to be retained.

As if all the above isn't enough, the new law adds one more tough new rule: Your deduction for meals will not be allowed unless you (1) establish that the item was directly related to or associated with the active conduct of your trade or business, and (2) you substantiate the deduction as required under present law. Simply put, you must discuss business during, directly before, or after the meal; then, document everything.

IRS FIELD AGENTS TO BE ARMED WITH LAPTOP COMPUTERS

Look Out! Big Brother's arms are growing. Undaunted by its misfortunes resulting from computerization of its service centers, the IRS is steamrolling ahead with a plan to arm its field agents with portable laptop computers for use in field audits. The IRS recently entertained bids from several computer hardware and software manufacturers on a blank order for portable computers with a single disk drive and modem.

What does this mean? In the not too distant future, an IRS field audit could become an inescapably excruciating experience for you, the taxpayer. A field agent, in effect, would become an extension of the entire IRS revenue collection and enforcement machine. Any plausible excuse a taxpayer might offer to attempt to knock down a proposed deficiency could be immediately verified or disproved on the spot.

For example, when calculating unreported income, the agent

could access your bank's bookkeeping records. When checking on meal or entertainment expenses, he could access your credit card's monthly statement records. Any information return in IRS data banks would be immediately at his fingertips so that tax consequences of business transactions with business associates or relatives could be checked. You get the idea. Just like Santa Claus, the field agent could tell if you've been naughty or nice, and he won't have to check his list twice. What's your reaction?...comforting?...disconcerting?...or maybe unprintable?

The mind boggles at the implications of the use of such machines. The backward rule of tax law--that the taxpayer is guilty until he proves himself innocent--could sink to a more unbridled and even harsher meaning. If you are not cooperative with the field agent, what other damaging information might he dredge up using his keyboard to change your way of thinking? Who else besides the field agent (a business competitor, perhaps) could access IRS data banks by manipulating these or compatible computers? What happens if a careless agent loses or an unscrupulous agent sells one of the computers, software and all, so that it falls into the wrong hands? Stayed tuned; your constitutional liberties may be in danger.

DIVORCE BECOMES MORE TAXING

The marriage/divorce game propels a complicated maze of rules, emotions, and traps into constant motion. Sounds just like the tax game. And if you play the divorce game, you are forced to play the tax game.

The new tax law must be carefully reviewed the instant you start to consider stepping into the divorce battle-ring. This item contains a checklist to help get you started.

Alimony: The IRS will now examine your alimony payments for only three years instead of six to determine if the payments are deductible by the paying spouse and income to the receiving spouse. Your alimony payments are fully deductible unless there is a difference of more than \$15,000 between the current year's payments and the average annual payment for the previous two or three years. This greatly simplifies things and generally makes it easier to deduct alimony. Careful: Child support still is not deductible.

Rate Changes: Lower tax rates reduce the value of an alimony deduction. The paying spouse must keep both eyes on the after-tax cost of the alimony, rather than the amount of the actual cash payment. In most cases, the receiving spouse will applaud the lower rates.

Appreciated Property: There is no tax on the transfer of appreciated property--for example, the family home or investment assets. However, when the receiving spouse sells the property, the gain is subject to tax. Remember, tax reform eliminated the benefits of long-term capital gains. Thus, the after-tax value of all appreciated property has been reduced, and you should strongly consider parting with valuable property instead of paying alimony.

Children: The exemption amount rises from \$1080 for 1986

to \$1,900 for 1987 and eventually to \$2,000 in 1989. The higher-income parent might find it worthwhile to trade non-deductible child support payments for the right to claim the exemptions. But beware of this trap--exemptions phase out starting in 1988 for a single taxpayer with income over \$89,560. If you earn more than that amount, you will get little or no benefit from the exemptions. Remarriage boosts the amount to \$149,250 on a joint return.

This article does not attempt to cover all of the rules, exceptions and traps. Get competent professional advice.

SURPRISE...PRIZES ARE TAXABLE

Millions of Americans have fallen in love with TV games shows. One popular daytime show offers contestants an opportunity to win a cool million dollars by competing with each other to solve a word puzzle. Your road to riches is paved with available letters, but select the dreaded "stinger," and you forfeit your turn.

The players are not told about a second stinger--winnings are taxable income. The tax is based on the fair market value of the prize. Cash, everyone's favorite, is no probable, but what if the prize is merchandise?

Suppose you are the lucky winner and the prize turns out to be the slightly battered original brass spittoon owned by General Sam Houston. "It is worth," shouts the game's host, "one hundred thousand dollars!" Smiles. Applause.

Next morning: If your effective tax rate is, to keep it simple, 25 percent, you should write a \$25,000 check to Uncle Sam to pay your estimated income tax. But wait, what if you don't have \$25,000?

Simply determine the fair market value, which is the price that a willing buyer would pay a willing seller when both are aware of all relevant facts and neither is under any obligation to buy or sell. Don't spend too much time wrestling with this definition. Instead, take your spittoon, with your proof of authenticity, to an antique dealer. Ask him to make you an offer, in writing. Then, try two more dealers. Sell to whoever makes the best offer. Now you have cash. Calculate your tax based upon the real fair market value (the price you got), and pay your estimated tax accordingly. If the IRS questions you (and it may, since it will receive a Form 1099 saying your prize was worth \$100,000), you have solid proof that you sold to the highest bidder.

If you decide to keep the prize, I strongly suggest you use this same approach to value it. However, when the prize involves services or merchandise generally available to the public (example: an all expenses-paid seven-day round-trip to beautiful Hoboken, N.J.), you will probably be taxed on the full retail value. Trying to sell the prize to your travel agent just won't hack it.

A NEW WAY TO TRANSFER YOUR BUSINESS

The typical closely-held business was founded and now is run by a one-man gang. Let's call him Joe Madit. Joe has been in business for a long time, is ready to retire, and now wants to transfer the business to his oldest son Jeff who is chomping at the bit to take over.

Whether Joe ends his business life at an early age or procrastinates until it is too late, transfer of ownership is a certainty. It is only a question of when. The more successful Joe's business becomes, the more the tax cost of the ultimate transfer.

As the years go by, I have seen and continue to see three types of tax disasters in business transfers:

1. The transfer is not done because the founder cannot find a professional who can solve his particular problems. The potential tax cost continues to mount.
2. Procrastination.
3. The transfer has been made. It was done wrong from a tax standpoint, and the founder or his family has been or will be clobbered taxwise.

Here's a typical set of objectives enumerated by my business-owning clients:

1. Continue to work until age 70 (Joe is now 57) when

his son Jeff will take over.

2. Then slow down, but remain active in a consulting capacity.
3. Keep voting control of the company until lifted to the big business in the sky.
4. Avoid paying income taxes when transferring the business during life, yet eliminate or reduce estate taxes.
5. Have a steady flow of income after retirement.
6. Joe's wife must be provided for should Joe die before her.
7. Joe's other two children, ages 27 and 28, who are not involved in the business, must receive a fair share of Joe's estate.

If three or more of the above objectives apply to you, keep reading.

Think S-corporation, which can have only one class of stock—common. Preferred stock is a no-no. But two types of common stock are allowed: voting and non-voting.

Here's a simple combined transfer/estate plan that can, in some cases, accomplish all of Joe's seven objectives (in other cases, most of them). Joe exchanges most of his voting common stock for non-voting common stock. Then, Joe begins an annual gift-giving program that transfers the non-voting stock to the three kids. With each stock gift, a portion of the current value of the business and its future growth is shifted to the next generation while Joe continues to maintain control. Best of all, this delightful tax trick can be accomplished tax-free.

Along with other traditional estate planning techniques, this S-corporation maneuver can solve some difficult family-transfer problems. No, this article does not intend to cover all of the possibilities, traps or exceptions. Yes, it can be the keystone of totally avoiding any estate tax for estates in the \$2 million range. And it can do a lot of damage to the government's estate-tax pocketbook for much larger estates.

One caution: Don't attempt it without an experienced professional leading the way.

OWN ANY OLD SERIES E BONDS?... THIS IS MUST READING

Back in World War II the government peddled "Victory Bonds" to finance the war. Technically, these were U.S. Series E savings bonds, which were replaced with Series EE bonds. The old Series E bonds were sold at 75 percent of face value and were payable in full after 10 years.

The tax rule is simple: The difference between cost and redemption value is taxable interest income to the bondholder. There are two ways to handle the income: You can elect to report a rateable portion of the income each year even though you have not received the money (few do this), or you can report 100 percent of the interest the year you cash out (the people's choice).

If you don't cash out when the bonds mature, interest continues to accrue. Bonds issued before 1952 have a "final



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maturity date"-40 years after the issue date. After this date, two bad things happen: The bonds no longer accrue interest, and the interest already earned becomes taxable.

Thus, Series E bonds bought in 1947 reach final maturity this year. But a bond that you (or your parents or grandparents) bought in 1947 for \$750 (with a face value of \$1,000) has been accruing interest for 40 years. Today, it is worth over \$4,000. Wow! But remember, the entire difference between cost and redemption value is taxable in 1987 whether the bond is or is not redeemed.

Is there a way out? Yes. Our generous government has provided one. You can swap your Series E bonds for Series HH bonds. Interest on the HH bonds is paid to you twice a year and is taxable when received. But what about the interest earned on the old Series E bonds?...It continues to be deferred. So, you have two good choices, collect your old bond proceeds and pay tax now; or trade for Series HH bonds and defer the tax. Doing nothing is also a choice, but a lousy one.

WINNING THE BUSINESS VALUATION GAME

It's almost a "catch 22" situation. You and your wife own all the stock in your closely held corporation. You have three sons and want to give them some shares. How do you value those shares for purposes of the gift tax? Recently, The Tax Court wrestled with this question in a real case (Ward, 87 TC 6). The answer to the question is important to every majority owner of a closely held corporation who wants to gift shares to his kids. Why? Well, if you go low, you can give away more shares, possibly with no gift tax liability. If you go high, the valuation may be used by the IRS for estate tax purposes after your death, increasing the tax burden on your heirs.

Worse is the fact that the law contains penalties for both under- and over-valuations. Either way, if the IRS examines your return and disagrees with the valuation, it may try to soak you with a nasty penalty. Catch 22.

The best way to deal with the problem is to get a professional appraisal from a qualified appraiser. This doesn't relieve you of the responsibility for the values used on your gift tax return. But the IRS is unlikely to assert a penalty if it knows you relied on the opinion of an unbiased, unrelated professional.

In most situations taxpayers prefer a low valuation for both gift and estate tax purposes. One way to get this benefit with little risk is to ask your appraiser to apply a valuation discount (called "discount for lack of marketability") because the shares are not publicly traded, and if applicable, a discount for a minority interest. That's what the Wards did when valuing the stock gifts to their three sons.

This is the argument the IRS made to the court: The gifted shares are part of a "pool" of the family interest; the family has control as a group. Because the family wants to retain control, it is unlikely to sell to outsiders. There is a ready market for the shares to either the corporation itself or to

the other shareholders.

Victory for our side! The Tax Court turned thumbs down on the IRS and allowed a 33 percent minority discount. With great wisdom and logic, the court observed that the taxpayers were not likely to buy back what they had given away. Further, the general public was not likely to invest because the family would still have control. And the kids wouldn't buy more shares because they didn't have the bucks. The professional appraisal was accepted with slight modifications.

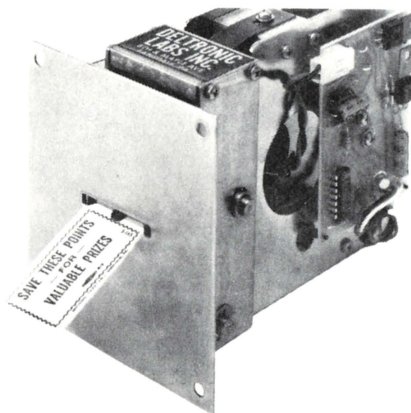
Remember this: The Tax Court takes a dim view of ruling on valuation matters. The judges don't have any expertise to rely on and, in the past, have often "split the difference" between the proposed values of the taxpayers and the IRS. The court has publicly warned both sides that someone may get hurt if this issue continues to be litigated.

And one thing is for sure: Be absolutely *certain* your appraiser is a bona fide expert. His fee will be much less than the cost of a trial.

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the amount of a charitable contribution deduction is equal to the fair market value (say \$10,000) of the property contributed? Now, suppose that property cost you only \$2,000. If you sold the property and gave the proceeds to charity, you would get the \$10,000 charitable deduction, but the sale would produce an \$8,000 taxable gain. What happens if you give the property to charity?...No taxable gain--not one cent, but you get the full \$10,000 charitable deduction. Not bad.

Now the IRS has taken some of the fun out of giving. In the case of a charitable gift of stock of a closely held corporation, certain requirements must be met to substantiate the value of the stock claimed for the deduction. If the value claimed for the closely held stock is more than \$10,000 (\$5,000 in the case of all other property), the requirements must be met.

You must obtain a formal appraisal from an independent appraiser to substantiate the value of your stock. The appraiser must give you two documents: (1) the appraisal itself, and (2) an appraisal summary. Then attach the appraisal summary to your tax return.

The appraisal report cannot be made earlier than 60 days before the charitable contribution is made, and must contain certain information describing the property contributed, the method by which the property was appraised, and the qualification of the appraiser. (See Reg 1.170A-13T.) The appraiser must be independent of you and the charitable organization, and must be qualified to value closely held corporations like yours.

Don't let this extra paperwork stop you from getting the benefit of giving appreciated property, particularly stock of your closely held corporation, to your favorite charity. Here's a tax-saving hint: Make your stock gift just under \$10,000. You get the same benefits and avoid all of the paper work.

A REAL LIFE HORROR STORY THAT DIDN'T HAVE TO HAPPEN

I hate stories like this. Thousands and thousands of dollars wasted on a bitter court trial. Members of a one-time happy family split into warring factions. Looking back, I can see how easy it would have been to avoid all the trouble. And now, I hope that by telling you the story, you won't let the same thing happen to you.

Here's the story. Two brothers owned their west coast business 50/50 and had worked together for years to build it to \$25 million in annual sales. Let's call them Joe and Brad. Joe and his wife Mary had two sons who were valuable employees in the business.

Time after time, I counseled them to execute a buy/sell agreement. Every time I brought it up, one of them--usually Joe--would apologize for putting it off and promised to do something about it real soon. But they never got it done. Before they had it drawn up, you guessed it, Joe died. Joe's will named his brother Brad the co-executor and trustee along with a local bank. Joe's entire estate, which consisted mainly

of the stock in the company, was left to a trust with his wife Mary as the sole beneficiary.

The executors asked me to value the company for estate tax purposes. Then, before Brad negotiated for the company to buy the stock from Joe's estate, he resigns as co-executor to avoid any conflict of interest. Once the company redeemed (bought) Joe's stock, Brad would become the sole shareholder. I was asked to do an update of the stock valuation for the sole purpose of setting a price for the redemption.

Everyone involved in the negotiations was represented by their own attorneys. This included the widow Mary, the bank as executor and trustee, the corporation and Brad. After many phone conferences, a deal was struck and the appropriate documents were signed.

Then Mary had second thoughts. She got a new lawyer and filed a suit to set aside the redemption agreement on the grounds that the price was too low and that there were conflicts of interest. Even though her sons sided with their uncle Brad, Mary was determined to go through with the trial.

The bank asked me to testify as an expert witness about the stock valuation. As it turned out, my valuation was upheld 100 percent, but that hardly seems to matter now. On the day I testified, there were eight lawyers in the courtroom and four other expert witnesses. The total cost was astronomical and Joe's estate paid most of the bill. Worst of all, the family isn't talking anymore. And none of it would have happened if Joe and Brad had signed a buy/sell agreement fixing the right and duties of all the parties.

Don't let it happen to you. Even a plan that isn't perfect will head off a lot of lawyers' costs and, more importantly, family anguish. Don't let another week go by without taking action.

ONE EASY WAY TO DOCUMENT YOUR EXPENSES

The tax law requiring documentation to support all business deductions for travel and entertainment expenses has been with us since 1962, and lots of taxpayers still aren't used to it. They balk at keeping a diary or other records on a contemporaneous basis.

"It's too much trouble," they say. And I keep hearing this myth: that charge-card copies are adequate documentation. Wrong! The IRS is entitled by law to know the place, date, amount spent, the name of the person entertained, the nature of the entertainment and the business relationship between you and the person entertained. All of these facts must be noted--charge card or otherwise--for every separate expenditure.

A diary really isn't that big a deal. Truck drivers keep diaries to comply with ICC regulations. Most professional people and executives live by their desk or pocket calendars to track their daily activities. Sales people, ministers, social workers, and doctors maintain appointment schedules. Why can't you keep a daily record of T&E expenses?

Okay, it's too much trouble, so try this one on for size. Carry a pocket tape recorder, the same kind you use for dictating a letter at your office. Whenever you spend money while traveling, dictate a quick note. "Chicago; March 1, 8:00 A.M.; snack at O'Hare while waiting for flight; \$5 (cash)."

Or perhaps: "Phoenix; March 5; entertained entire staff of local office at Beefeaters after business discussion at 4:30 P.M.; drinks and dinner \$192 (charge) including tip. Big morale boost."

Don't wait. Do it on the spot. If there was music in the background at Beefeaters, you'll even have sound effects. Should be very convincing when the IRS agent listens.

YES, YOUR CHILDREN CAN BE A LEGAL TAX SHELTER

Have you ever heard the tax battle cry for the American family? "United we stand, divided we save on taxes." Tax reform made it tougher to win the save-family-taxes-by-dividing game, especially if you attempt to shift investment income to your children. For kids under age 14, unearned income over \$1,000 is taxed at their parents' top rate. Even interest on earned income banked by the child is corralled by this rule. Simply put, all of the child's unearned income, no matter what the source, is lumped together, and every dollar over \$1,000 is taxed as income to the parents.

But there's an easy way to turn the tables on the IRS? How? The above rule doesn't apply to income actually earned by a child. So it makes good tax sense to hire your children of all ages whenever possible to work in your business. But careful, their wages must be reasonable (the same you would others and for work actually performed).

How much can your child earn without paying any tax? That depends on whether you are entitled to the dependency exemption for the child. Here are the numbers: In 1987, a child can earn \$2,540 free of tax if you take the child as a dependent; if you don't take the child as a dependent, the number jumps to \$4,440. The tax-free amounts will be boosted to \$3,000 and \$4,950 (when the child takes his (her) own dependency exemption) in 1988.

Best of all, reasonable wages paid to your children are fully deductible by your business. The wages are deducted from your high-tax-rate income and are tax-free to the kids, up to the amounts indicated above. In effect, your kids allow you to snap the perfect tax shelter picture.

Added bonus: If you operate your business as a sole proprietorship, your children's wages are not subject to Social Security tax if they are under age 21.

RENTING BEFORE SELLING YIELDS COZY TAX DEDUCTION

Everyone knows it. There's no place like home. Now, even the tax collector knows it. Get this: a court recently

ruled that if you rent your house while attempting to sell it, you are entitled to two tax breaks: (1) you don't have to pay tax on the proceeds from the sale of your home, and (2) you can deduct losses incurred while renting the house before the sale (Bolaris, 11/22/85, CA-9).

Here's the story. Steve and Valerie Bolaris moved into a new home, but were unable to sell their old one. To cut the cost of carrying two properties at the same time, they decided to rent the old home, while listing it for sale with a broker. After eight months of renting, they evicted the tenant, spruced the old place up, and sold it.

Now for the two tax breaks. First, you don't have to recognize any gain on the sale of your home if (a) you buy a new one within two years before or after selling your old home, and (b) the price of the new home equals or is more than the sales price of your old home (Section 1034). So, Steve and Valerie paid no tax on the gain from the sale of their old home.

The second tax break (Sections 167 and 212) is a bit tricky. You can deduct depreciation and rental expenses incurred on property held for the production of income. Steve and Valerie did exactly that for the eight months they rented the old home. The IRS said "No" to using both tax breaks, and disallowed the depreciation and rental expenses. The Tax Court agreed with the IRS.

But the appellate court hoisted the tax-victory flag for Steve and Valerie. The court held that the first tax break does not automatically preclude the second tax break. The court listed three reasons: 1. The couple had abandoned living in their old home; 2. After leaving the home, they made no further use of it; 3. They rented it at a fair rental value.

The third reason is the most important, because in order to qualify property for the depreciation and rental expense deductions, the taxpayer must use it for the purpose of making a profit. Since Steve and Valerie did not use the old home in any personal way, and rented it at a fair rental value, that was evidence that they had a profit motive.

Here's a suggestion: Put this item with the title to your house. Read it when you are about to sell. If you find yourself in the same position as Steve and Valerie, The Bolaris case will be right up your tax alley.

HOW TO HANDLE YOUR BUSINESS EXPENSES

The closer we look at the new tax law, the less sense it seems to make. Why, for example, should one person who pays \$2,000 for legitimate business expenses be allowed to deduct the cost on his Form 1040 while another person cannot? Before tax reform, such business expenses were fully deductible. But now, it depends.

If you are self-employed, you can deduct the full \$2,000, but if you are an employee, you must itemize your deductions in order to claim the expense, and even then, you may not be able to deduct all of the \$2,000. It depends on a fistfull

of new rules having to do with whether you itemize, how much you make and how much you claim as miscellaneous deductions.

Here are the basic rules: Starting in 1987, the total of your miscellaneous itemized deductions are subject to a floor of two percent of your adjusted gross income. Included are such important items as tax preparation fees and unreimbursed employee business expenses (such as travel and entertainment).

Let's take a look at an example. Your adjusted gross income for 1987 is \$100,000 and your total miscellaneous itemized deductions are \$5,500, \$5,000 in unreimbursed employee expenses and \$500 for tax advice. You can deduct only \$3,500 calculated as follows:

Total miscellaneous itemized deductions	\$5,500
Floor (\$100,000 x 2%)	\$2,000
Deductible amount	\$3,500

Is there a way to beat these new rules? Yes, if you are an employee. If you operate your business as a corporation, you are an employee and there is a relatively simple way for you to nail down the full deduction. Have your corporation reimburse you for all of the business expenses you pay out of your own pocket. The reimbursement (\$5,000 in the above example) offsets your expenses and is tax free to you. Then, your total miscellaneous itemized deductions will only be \$500; better to lose only a \$500 deduction instead of \$2,000. And the corporation gets a deduction for the full amount (\$5,000).

LEGAL KICKBACK PAYMENTS CAN BE DEDUCTIBLE BUSINESS EXPENSE

Most of us like to think of ourselves as honest. However, at some time in their life, most business people are confronted with a difficult situation not of their making that requires them to think about doing something they ordinarily wouldn't do, like make bribes or pay kickbacks.

Recognizing this facet of business life, the law allows a business expense deduction for legal kickbacks or bribes (i.e., those not prohibited by law) if making such payments is an established practice in your industry, or they are found to be ordinary and necessary to the operation of your business.

Two recent cases illustrate the application of this rule: One businessman won, and the other lost.

First, the winner: In the Raymond Bertolini Trucking Co. case, (Ca-6, 84-2 USTC 9591), a subcontractor was awarded a shopping mall construction project. After the job began, the subcontractor's president was approached by the general contractor's site supervisor and told in no uncertain terms that unless he made a kickback payment to the supervisor, the subcontractor would not be allowed to continue the project. Then the general contractor refused to pay a large invoice for completed work, putting the subcontractor in a financial bind. As a result, the subcontractor coughed up the kickback money.

The IRS denied a deduction claimed for the payments. The Tax Court agreed with the IRS.

Three cheers for the appellate court; it sided with the subcontractor. Even though the subcontractor did not prove

that such payments were an industry practice (in fact, they were illegal in most states), the payments in this case were necessary and reasonable because, if not made, the business would have been destroyed. The court proved its wisdom by reasoning that extraordinary payments are ordinary and necessary for tax purposes if they are defensive in nature and help a business survive.

Now the loser: In the Car-Ron Asphalt Paving Co. case, the same appellate court held that a subcontractor, who paid for work done on the home of the general contractor's vice president in charge of awarding subcontracts, could not deduct the payments because they were neither helpful nor appropriate to the subcontractor's business. Why? The subcontractor had operated for 13 years and had been awarded 20 previous contracts with the same general contractor without engaging in any extracurricular shenanigans. The fact that the payments were the first of their kind led the court to the conclusion that they were not necessary.

Note the difference: In the first case, the kickback payments were necessary; in the second case, they were not. The bottom line is that to make sure that such payments are deductible, you must show that the payments are not illegal. In addition, you should be prepared to show that they are essential to the operation of your business and/or an established industry practice.

401(K) PLANS STILL A TAX-SAVING STAR

In many ways, the 401(K) plan took a beating from tax reform. But there it is, still standing as one of the best tax-beaters for nearly everybody who works for a living. Of course, the clamps that were slapped on IRAs have a lot to do with it, but the 401(K) plan always was a tax-saving star. Tax reform managed to tarnish it a little, but it still outshines most everything else. Here's why. 1. Employees can make larger contributions to a 401(K) plan than to an IRA. True, the top amount has been slashed from \$30,000 to \$7,000, but it's still a lot more than the \$2,000 ceiling on IRA contributions. And you may not be able to deduct any contributions to an IRA if you're covered by a pension or profit sharing plan (including a 401(K) plan).

Sometimes, contributing to a 401(K) plan can actually boost the amount you can sock away in your IRA. For example, if you are married and have joint adjusted gross income of \$47,000, the new law limits your IRA contribution to \$600. But by putting \$7,000 into your 401(K) plan, you can contribute the full \$2,000 to your IRA. In a nutshell, this is why: Married taxpayers filing a joint return can deduct the full \$2,000 contributed to an IRA as long as joint adjusted gross income is \$40,000 (\$25,000 for singles) or less; the deduction falls to zero if income reaches \$50,000 (\$35,000 for singles) or more; between \$40,000 and \$50,000 the \$2,000 IRA maximum is reduced by \$1 for each \$5 of income. 2. Employees can make hardship withdrawals through loans from a 401(K)

plan. Again, tax reform tightened the rules somewhat, but it's still an option that you don't get with an IRA. 3. When you retire, lump sum distributions from a 401(K) plan may be eligible for five-year averaging, which you can't do with IRA distributions. This special treatment could give you more after-tax dollars to spend in retirement. 4. Penalty-free withdrawals may be available upon retirement or for hardship purposes once you reach age 59 1/2. You can't do this with an IRA either.

PAY RAISES WHY LESS MEANS MORE

Here's a bit of tax-rate magic brought to you as a courtesy of the Tax Reform Act of 1986. Lower tax rates will give employees an automatic pay raise this year, and an even bigger one next year. Unfortunately, it's going to cost the company more to pay employees the same gross compensation.

Some specifics: Let's assume a top-bracket employee earns a \$10,000 bonus. In 1986, when the top rate was 50 percent, he got to keep \$5,000. The top rate in 1988 drops to 28 percent, so a \$10,000 bonus will put \$7,200 in his pocket--a whopping 44 percent more than he received in 1986. Great news!

And now, the bad news. Many companies will find it harder to hold the line on compensation and determine the amount of raises. Why? Because lower corporate tax rates increase the after-tax cost of salaries. Take a look at the \$10,000 bonus from the corporation's point of view. Back in 1986, that bonus cost the company \$5,400 (because the top tax rate was 46 percent). But in 1988, the top rate falls to 34 percent, which means the after-tax cost of a deductible expense rises from 54 cents to 66 cents--a 22 percent jump. Something's got to give.

One approach might be to cut the \$10,000 bonus down to where the executive still receives \$5,000 in 1988 after taxes, just like he did in 1986. Assuming he's in the top tax bracket of 28 percent, the company would have to pay a bonus of only \$6,944. And instead of costing the company \$5,400 after taxes, the bonus would cost only \$4,583.

This might make the corporation happy, but not the executive. So, another approach might be to hold the line on corporate spending and earmark the same after-tax amount for the bonus, \$5,400. Now watch this: In 1988, that \$5,400 requires only a bonus of \$8,182. This would put \$5,891 in the executive's pocket after taxes, \$891 more than he received in 1986. The company pays less (a smaller bonus, but the same after-tax cost) and the executive gets more. Neat!

Employees deserve an explanation of the new payroll economics under tax reform. They should know why it will be harder for the company to afford larger raises and why smaller raises will net them more than in the past.

Suggestion: Circulate a memo showing a similar analysis for the 1987 phase-in rates. Stress how the lower tax rates provide a built-in pay raise for employees while making salaries more expensive for the company.

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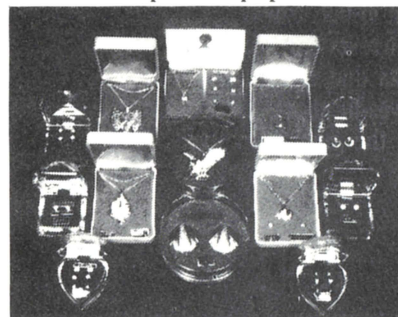
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A NEW WAY TO CONTROL YOUR TAXABLE EARNINGS

Wouldn't it be great if you could decide in advance exactly how much income you wanted to pay taxes on each year? Sound too good to be true? If you are an employee, it is true. Best of all, it's relatively easy to accomplish.

All you have to do, basically, is sign an agreement indicating how much of your income you wish to push into next year or a more distant year. You can defer all or any portion of it. What's the advantage? You don't have to pay tax on the income until it is actually received.

To get a little more technical, the agreement you sign must be a deferred compensation plan adopted by your employer. The plan should provide that the obligation to pay the deferred amounts will be recorded on the employer's books, but no funds will actually be set aside in a trust account. Your account must at all times be an unsecured general obligation of the corporation. You can only defer compensation that will be earned after the date of the agreement; once earned, compensation cannot be deferred.

The plan also should provide that your right to receive payment cannot be assigned, transferred, pledged or otherwise encumbered. Here's a net tax bonus: The amounts credited to your account can earn a reasonable rate of interest, if the plan so provides. The interest also escapes tax until you receive it. What about the employer?...He must pay tax on any interest earned, but he can deduct the full amount as compensation when it's paid to you.

The IRS recently approved just such a plan (Letter Ruling 8703056). That plan provided that the entire account would be paid in the year after the employee terminated his employment.

Before rushing into such an arrangement, you should consider its non-tax aspects. The deferral election you make each year is irrevocable. Remember, the plan is unfunded, so weigh the risks that the employer may not be able to pay you after you leave. In short, even though it's easy to do, be sure you're doing the right thing and doing it right.

FREE ADVICE FROM THE IRS IS NO BARGAIN

Recently, IRS Commissioner Lawrence Gibbs proudly announced that when the public seeks advice from the IRS, the agency is right about 90 percent of the time. Sounds good, until you look behind the statistics and see the trouble the Service can cause for people like Harry Turney, who had the misfortune of being among the 10 percent receiving bad advice.

As a loyal government employee for many years, Harry was

well aware that the IRS provided free tax advice as a public service. Harry was retiring early on a disability pension and wanted to know if the pension would be tax free until he reached age 65, when his regular pension would kick in. An IRS agent told him not to worry because a disability pension was not taxable. He checked with another agent who confirmed the good news.

After three years of excluding the disability pension from his income, Harry was told by a third agent that the first two were dead wrong. Suddenly, Harry was faced with paying three years of back taxes plus interest. Feeling victimized by the IRS, he petitioned the Tax Court for relief. You guessed it: The court sided with the third IRS agent.

The law is the law, said the court, and the law says that a disability pension is taxable. Sorry, but what Harry was told by the first two agents didn't count; he still had to pay the tax. It may be an old cliché, but *you generally get what you pay for*.

A WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY IS CLOSING

Does your corporation own appreciated real estate? If so, this item is must reading. Why? Because the new tax law sets a giant tax trap. Electing S corporation status can avoid the trap.

First, some background: A prime benefit of S-corporation status is the *one level* of federal income tax--only at the individual shareholder level, none at the corporate level. How does a regular corporation get socked for two taxes? Well, the first tax is assessed when the corporation sells the building, and the second tax clobbers the individual shareholder when the funds are withdrawn (as a dividend or when the corporation is liquidated).

In the good old days, an easy way to beat the double tax was to elect S corporation status. However, Congress never liked the idea that a regular tax-paying corporation could elect S corporation status and avoid double taxation. So they changed the law to provide that capital gains realized on appreciated property in the *first three years* of an S corporation (that had previously been a regular corporation) would be taxed at the top regular corporate tax rate. Tax reform extends the timeframe to the *first ten years*.

Let's examine the current law through an easy-to-understand, tax-beating example. Your business operates out of real estate that your regular corporation bought for \$250,000 back in 1971. Its depreciated value on the books is \$50,000. Say you sell it in 1988 for \$550,000. Your corporation would pay a \$170,000 tax (34 percent rate) on the \$500,000 profit. If you wanted to get your hands on the after-tax profit of \$380,000 (\$550,000 minus \$170,000), you would have to pay an additional \$106,400 (28 percent times \$380,000). That's a total tax burden of \$276,400.

So much for the background. Now, let's talk about saving dollars. If you would have been an S corporation for the proper

length of time, your total tax would have been only the first \$170,000, a savings of \$106,400.

Tax reform gives you a window of opportunity. As a general rule, if you elect S corporation status *on or before December 31, 1988* and the value of your corporation is \$5 million or less, you are off the double-tax hook for real estate (and other assets yielding capital gains) after only a three-year wait. For corporations with a value between \$5 million and \$10 million, the single-tax benefit is phased out. What happens if you elect S status after 1988? The three-year waiting period is extended to ten years. Don't let this window of opportunity close on you.

This is complicated stuff. You must answer such tough questions as, Should I elect S status?...When?...And what is the value of my corporation? And, of course, this article does not give all of the rules, traps and exceptions. Get professional help.

TAX TRAP IF YOU CLAIM CHILD CARE CREDIT

When you pay for child care in order to work, you may be entitled to a tax credit of up to \$720 for one child and \$1,440 for two or more children. A tax credit is nice

because it reduces your tax bill dollar for dollar. With the growing number of households in which both parents work, the delights of the child care credit are being discovered by more and more taxpayers. But lurking in the background is a nasty tax trap the IRS is poised to spring on the unsuspecting.

First, the basic law: There's a whole other set of rules that requires you to withhold taxes, pay Social Security and file payroll tax returns when you pay wages to a babysitter or housekeeper of over \$50 per quarter. Technically, you are an "employer," so you have to compute the withholding tax, pay 7.15 percent of the wages for Social Security, and then file an employer's tax return on Form 942.

Now, the trap: But how, you might ask, will the IRS find out how much you've paid to babysitters? You squeal on yourself when you fill out Form 2441 to claim the child care credit. The IRS simply cross checks to see if you filed Form 942. If you didn't file, you can expect to get a fat bill for the unpaid payroll taxes, plus penalties and interest. Keep this tax trap in mind when you set your sights on milking the child care credit. You may conclude that it isn't worth the extra time and expense.

For more information on the above tax laws contact: Book Division, Blackman Kallick Bartelstein, 300 South Riverside Plaza, Chicago, IL, 60606.

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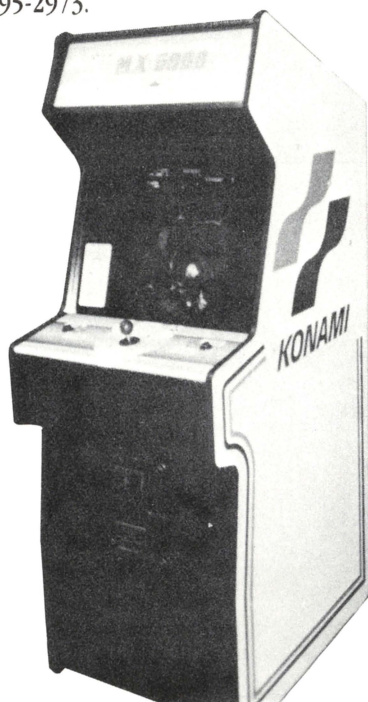
Konami introduces *MX-5000*, a one-or two-player vertical monitor kit with a continuation feature.

In *MX-5000* the player engages in air-to-air, air-to-ground, and air-to-sea combat in a mission to find and annihilate a secret enemy base. Using shoot and bomb buttons and an eight-way joystick, he strategically destroys enemy planes, helicopters, cannons, tanks, and ships.

If the player fills up the plane or tank gauge by destroying enough enemies, he is awarded power-ups such as lasers and double lasers instead of bullets and triple or quintuple bombs. Speed-up is also given as a power-up.

Action takes the player through five stages: plain, volcano, ocean, tundra, and inside the enemy base. By destroying the small base at the end of each stage, the player can advance to the next stage. Players can fire in 16 directions when trying to destroy bases. If the mission is completed, the game repeats with a higher difficulty level.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Konami, Inc., 815 Mittel Drive, Wood Dale, IL 60191; (312) 595-2973.



Champagne Edition FIRE!

Williams announces a limited edition model of its popular new pinball, *FIRE!* Classically designed, it is termed the champagne edition.

This special edition has all the features of the original *FIRE!*, such as a second floor shot to lock up balls for three-ball multi-ball, fire escape ramps to save trapped victims, ragtime music; and a sound system with three-way speakers, dual microprocessor, simulated stereo, and Yamaha synthesizer.

Other features include longer life flipper power and heavy duty power supply. The plunger shot can score up to 100,000, then fire breaks out at random and players must race to put them out.

The cabinet is a hand-finished fine grain wood cabinet with brushed brass finished trim and enhanced animated backbox. The game is available in a limited production run.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Williams Electronics Games, Inc., 3401 N. California Ave., Chicago, IL 60618; (312) 267-2240.

Double Play

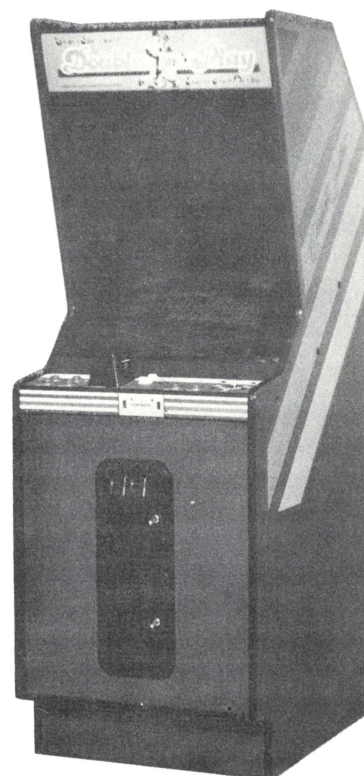
The Leland Corp. has just released its newest video, *Double Play*, that's actually two games in one.

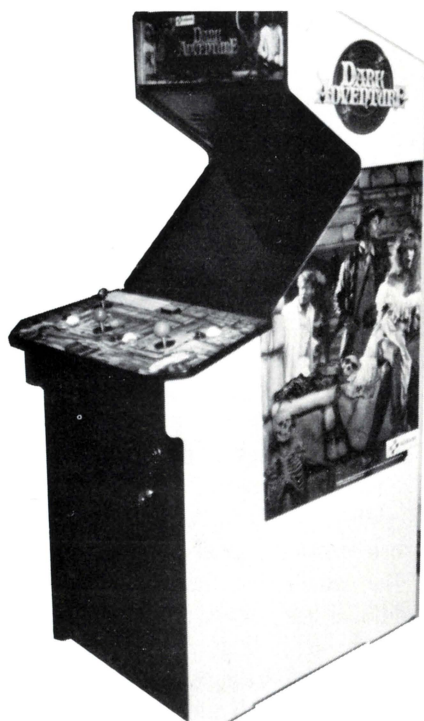
The player may choose between *Super Baseball* and *Home Run Derby* for true baseball action. *Super Baseball* includes features of the well-known game, *World Series*. In *Super Baseball* players can pitch, swing, hit, run, bunt, catch, and steal. Game play is realistic with simplified controls that put the player in complete control of the action. Sound effects include a cheering crowd and the familiar crack of the bat. A special feature is the stat key that lets players keep tabs on their scores.

Home Run Derby challenges one-or two-players to go the distance and compete for home run distances and percentages.

The game is available in dedicated form; also modular, conversion, and countertop versions.

For more information, or distributor referral, write The Leland Corp., 1841 Friendship Drive, El Cajon, CA 92020; (619) 562-7000.





Dark Adventure

Players are invited to embark on an adventure through fantasy worlds in Konami's new dedicated video, *Dark Adventure*. The quest for the one-to three-players is to find and destroy the leader of an evil demon empire.

Characters include Labryna, who attacks enemies with a sword; Condor, who uses a whip; and Zorlock, who carries a spear. This adventurous trio faces many challenges and must battle rats, giant spiders, skeletons, and other monsters.

The three search for keys to unlock exits and enter new worlds. Along the way they may pick up special powers, including: magic power, laser, flame-thrower, shield, dynamite, speed-up, and food to replenish energy levels.

A special map button provides clues to the location of keys and exits and can only be used in certain worlds. A total of 40 worlds retains player interest.

The horizontal monitor game has one map button; jump/start, attack, and dynamite buttons; eight-way joystick; and buy-in continuation features.

For more information, or distributor referrals, write Konami, Inc., 815 Mittel Drive, Wood Dale, IL 60191; (312) 595-1443.

Compact Pay Phone

Pay Phone Industries introduces a *Pay Option Phone* that installs in one minute and can operate as a pay phone or standard phone.

The phone helps control business phone abuse. The unit can be set up to charge 25 cents for local calls every three to five minutes or for unlimited time; the emergency 911 number is free. Long distance calls can be blocked, thereby ending unauthorized long distance phone calls by employees and customers.

The *Pay Option Phone* can be purchased outright or rented. The phone is designed to control costs and generate new revenue with pay telephones.

An optional steel case is available for wall mounting. Installation is easy using a standard modular phone plug.

For more information, write Pay Phone Industries, 2415 W. Amherst, Bloomington, IN 47401 (812) 333-9939.



Dragon Spirit

Atari Games announces the release of *Dragon Spirit*, an action video set in an ancient mythical kingdom.

Dragon Spirit takes players to a land of prehistoric beings. After a millennium of captivity, the ugly serpent demon Zawell escapes imprisonment and kidnaps the princess Alicia. The hero, Amul, a young and crafty soldier, is selected to rescue Alicia and destroy Zawell.

Players are equipped with an eight-way joystick and two fire buttons. As the hero, they must battle a variety of predators and destroy the beast who guards the path to Zawell and the princess.

One fire button launches a lethal air attack, another a vicious ground assault. As a single-headed dragon, players cannot attack both air and ground simultaneously. Bombing and obtaining the contents of blue eggs provide the growth of additional heads for air/ground attacks. Red eggs reward the player with incremental levels of mighty firing power. Players travel from barren wastelands to hot lava-spewing volcanic peaks.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Atari Games Corp., 675 Sycamore Drive, Milpitas, CA 95035; (408) 434-3799.

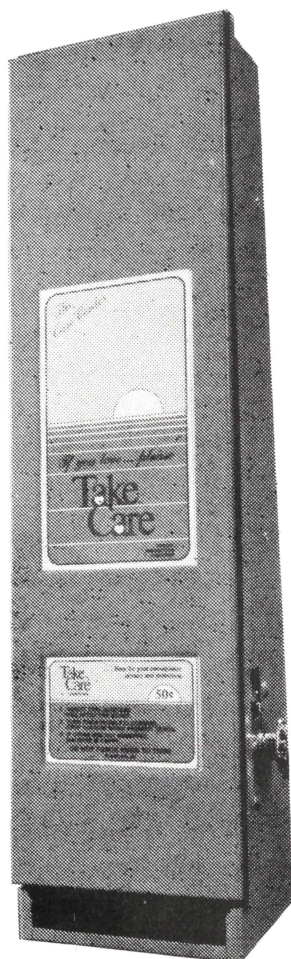
Take Care Center

Vendom Mfg. has developed the *Take Care Center* condom vending machine with a coin mechanism that accommodates 25 cents to \$1.25.

The *Take Care Center* comes with tasteful labels for the unit and for use on doors, mirrors, and walls as point-of-purchase advertising. Labels include such statements as: "Please be safe with...Take Care Condoms sold here," and "Please don't forget...Take Care Condoms sold here."

Dimensions of the machine are 25.5 x 7.5 x 6 inches and the capacity is 120 items. *Take Care Centers* are constructed of heavy gauge steel with two security hasps for padlocking. Quality USFDA approved condoms are available.

For more information, write Vendom Manufacturing, Inc., 373 N. University Drive, Suite 444, Plantation, FL 33324; 800/635-6366 or (305) 587-7933.



Splash Guns

Alter Enterprises introduces *Splash Guns*, a gun shooting gallery game for one-to four-players.

In *Splash Guns* when players insert coins the mounted machine guns begin firing a stream of water at 38 different animated targets. When targets are hit, flags spin or knights fall down. Gravity force causes each of the animations to move independently in a domino effect. Each gun operates independently from the others.

The animations are snap-on sections and can be changed to give the game a new look. Brackets, stops, and pivots on the water shooter guns are designed for long life.

A special plastic cover protects the coin mechs from any water damage or abuse. A spare parts kit is included with every unit and an easy to understand service manual with cartoon style diagrams.

Splash Guns requires a fresh water line, a 20-amp electrical output, and a ten-foot square area for operation.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Alter Enterprises, 25 Dwight Place, Fairfield, NJ 07006; (201) 882-9866.

Powerkick Soccer

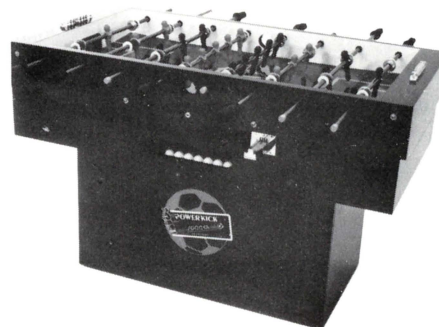
Amazing Games Corp. enters the table game market with the introduction of *Powerkick Soccer*, a new-look futsal table with seamless playfield.

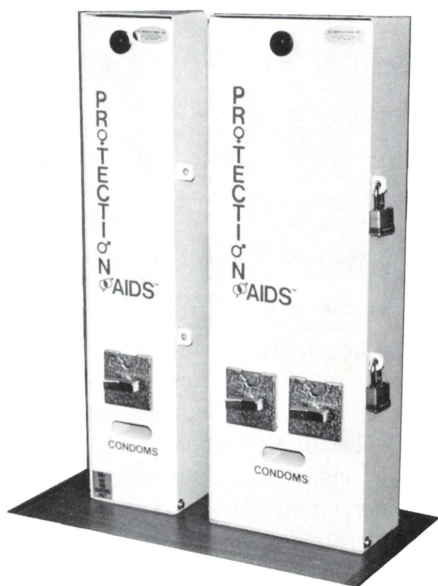
Features of *Powerkick Soccer* include a one-piece, wear-free bearing system that requires little service; playfield of high-pressure plastic laminate for faster action and better bank shot capability; and durable corner construction to eliminate breakage.

Amazing Games also offers medium-size handles for better grip, traction, and playability; plus newly designed men that absorb greater impact.

The game's base design, replacing the traditional legs, offers increased stability. The cash box is large and located on the inside to discourage tampering. There is a cheat-proof ball delivery mechanism and adjustable ball vend. The coin chute allows prices to be set from 25 cents to \$1.

For more information, write Amazing Games Corp., P.O. Box 6798, Portland, OR 97228; (503) 281-3829.





Protection Aids

R.M.V. Sales announces the availability of a new condom vending machine, *Protection Aids*, in both single and double unit size.

The cabinet is constructed of 16 gauge steel and the door reinforced to 1/8 inch thick. All seams are welded and two solid steel security bars with holes for padlocks are included.

The capacity of *Protection Aids* in the double unit size is 288 condoms in a four column configuration. The single unit size holds 144 condoms. The coin mech is set for 50 cent vend but a conversion kit adjusts it to 75 cents or \$1.

Machine dimensions are 30.5 x 9.5 x 6.5 inches for the double unit; 30.5 x 6.75 x 5 inches for the single unit.

For more information, write R.M.V. Sales, Inc., 336 Steubenville Pike, Imperial, PA 15126; (412) 695-2406 or 922-8058.

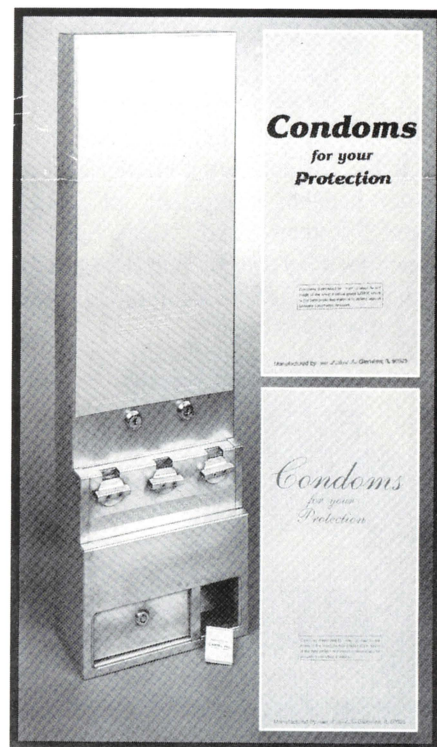
Customer Pay Phone

Pay Bell Communications now offers a coin-operated customer convenience pay phone with local and long distance calling capabilities that allows restaurants, lounges, clubs, and other locations to keep privately owned pay phone revenues.

The desk-top unit is FCC registered, plugs into a standard jack for hook-up to existing phone lines, and converts to a free phone with a special owner's key. An optional solid oak lock-up stand displays easy to read dialing instructions in heavy gauge formica. The stand securely attaches the phone to a counter or wall and conceals the coin drawer access.

Features include touch-tone dialing, coinless emergency calls, and coin return if there is no answer. It is constructed of high-impact plastic and available in a choice of colors.

For more information, write Pay Bell Communications, 800 S. Pacific Coast Hwy., Redondo Beach, CA 90277; (213) 316-1558.



Condom Vending Unit

L'Appel, Inc. introduces its *Model ST-8387* condom vending unit constructed of stainless steel.

The unit comes with a 12-month guarantee against vandalism. The coin box, which holds 800 quarters, is totally protected with a cylinder lock that cannot be picked.

Features include front panel access (the front panel is hooked into the cabinet) and two locks with two-sided tumblers that cannot be picked. Condom stacks are removable for easy loading and the machine holds 270 condoms. Cigarette packs are also available. All the condoms distributed by L'Appel are made in the U.S.A.

The coin mech can be set for 50 cent vend, 75 cents, or \$1. A special order vend is available for \$1.25 or \$1.50.

When the machine is empty, no coins are accepted. Each unit comes with three decorative and informative labels in gray, pink, or silver. Machine dimensions are 35 x 10 x 5 inches.

For more information, write L'Appel, Inc., 1804 Johns Ave., Glenview, IL 60025; (312) 998-9500.

TRADE ACCESSORIES

PORTABLE CURRENCY COUNTER

A new product bulletin from Brandt, Inc., manufacturer of coin and currency handling equipment, cash settlement systems and vault systems, describes a lightweight, portable, currency counter that offers accuracy, efficiency, and speed.



Model 8641, Brandt's smallest and lightest currency counter can count either 500 or 1000 documents per minute and batches in groups of 5, 10, 20, 25, 50 and 100. The new bulletin presents the model's operating features including auto stops when the preset batch is reached or on a "half" or "double," an auto-sensor that restarts the count when each batch is removed, and an audible signal on errors. Options include a variable counting capability for batches from 1 to 999, and magnetic counterfeit detection.

For more information, write John Angove, Director of Marketing, Brandt, Inc., 1750 Woodhaven Drive, Bensalem, PA 19020, 215-638-3600.

VF DISPLAY MODULE

The Industrial Products Division of Industrial Electronic Engineers, Inc. (IEE) announces the addition of a new, low-cost, 5x7 dot matrix, 1x24 display to its FLIP line of intelligent vacuum fluorescent display modules.



The Model 3600-89-024 is a "no-frills" FLIP ideal for high-volume OEM applications such as pay telephones, copiers, point-of-sale terminals, and security systems. The ultra-compact module measures 8.00"W x 1.68"H x 0.94"D. Legibility is enhanced by the 0.266" (6.75mm) characters, which are 1/3 larger than the size typically used in VF display modules.

The unit displays 96 upper and lower-case letters, numbers and symbols. Display characters are a bright, pleasant, blue-green color that provides for comfortable short or long-term viewing. A wide spectrum of color filters is available to fit almost any application.

For more information, contact IEE, Industrial Products Division Sales Office, 7740 Lemona Ave., Van Nuys, CA, 91409, (818) 787-0311, ext. 418.

COIN SLIDE FOR CANADIAN DOLLAR

Equipment Systems and Devices, Inc. (ESD) offers a patented vertical coin slide that accommodates the new Canadian dollar coin. ESD believes its GX5 5 Coin Slide is the only coin slide with this one dollar capability.

The GX5 can handle from one to five coins in various one dollar and quarter combinations. The slide is available for immediate shipment.

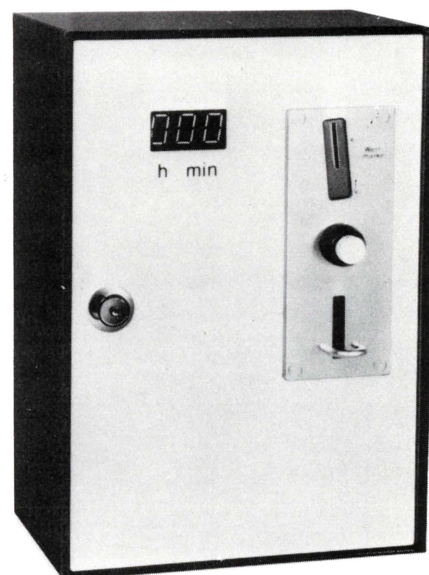
ESD manufactures products for the coin laundry and vending industries including four, five, and eight coin slides, money boxes, coin kits, high security locks, and special parts and accessories under the ESD brand name.

For more information, contact ESD in Canada, 800-328-1320; or the U.S., 800-523-1510. Or write Equipment Systems and Devices, 1401 Dreshertown Road, Dresher, PA 19025.

COIN-OP TIMERS

Advanced Components Industries, Inc. now offers coin operated timers from Gruner GmbH of Germany.

The timers, which switch equipment on and off, can be applied to sun tan beds

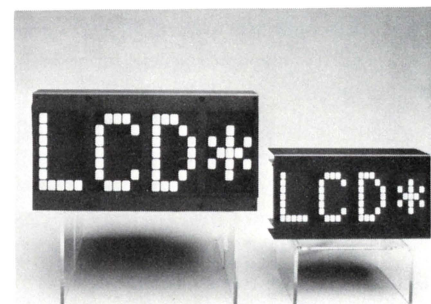


and other types of products. Options include adjustable operation time, inserted coin adds onto the remaining time, LED display, coin counter, panic button, and elapsed time indicator.

For more information, write Advanced Components Industries, Inc., 120 Center St., El Segundo, CA 90245, (213) 322-4249.

SUPERNOVA SYSTEM

The Industrial Products Division of Industrial Electronic Engineers, Inc. (IEE), manufacturer of electronic displays, keyboards, and sign components,



announces the Supernova system of large-character high-performance liquid crystal displays.

The system consists of stackable four character LCD modules and a serial-ASCII input controller card. Supernova is well suited to a variety of applications,

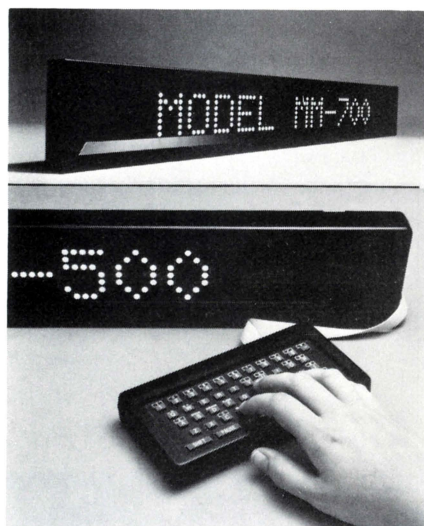
including flight information display systems, scoreboards, advertising message centers, industrial annunciators, and movie marquees.

These extra large display modules feature 5x7 dot matrix characters that can display upper and lower case letters, numerals, and punctuation symbols. The modules may be strung into lines up to 40 characters long. Displays are available in character heights of 2.5 inches and 4 inches.

For more information, contact IEE, Industrial Products Division Sales Office, 7740 Lemona Avenue, Van Nuys, CA, 91409, or call (818) 787-0311, ext. 418.

MOVING MESSAGE DISPLAYS

Text Lite, Inc. manufactures moving message displays ranging in size from 20 inches long to 11 feet long. The red, illuminated boards can display 16 characters at a time with a memory to display as many as 2,040 characters.



Such moving messages were first seen at airports and financial institutions but are now in use in any location where only a few valuable seconds are available to promote or describe a product.

These signs can impact sales figures by drawing attention to a coin-op location that offers new games, tournaments and discounts.

Text Lite also has developed *Combivision*, that synchronizes programmable red, illuminated moving text with nine-by-nine inch back lit transparencies accompanied by as much as a full page of

typewritten descriptions.

The transparencies can be substituted or re-arranged and feature a glare-resistant screen while the text can be input using a detachable typewriter-style program keyboard or a computer that has a built-in RS-232C interface.

For more information on these moving message displays, write Text Lite, Inc., 4120 Birch Street, Newport Beach CA 92660, or call (714) 476-0855.

ZIPPER CASE TOOL KITS

Hand Tool Industries introduces a full line of Zipper case tool kits for service, installation and maintenance



technicians and engineers servicing electronic equipment. This line is in addition to the company's selection of attache type tool kits.

Many of the zipper kits are engineered for a specific electronic application, such as office machines, or telephone equipment. However, several are designed to handle multi-purpose service needs, such as the HTK-30, which provides the engineer or technician a variety of tools to work on copiers, drives, computers and varied similar type electronic equipment.

Each zipper kit features individual tool pockets for each tool. The service engi-

neer has every tool readily handy, plus he can easily spot an open pocket at job completion to avoid misplacing his tools. Several of the kits also feature a built-in meter pocket, with a snug-strap for holding the meter leads conveniently and securely. Most have special internal pouches, with Velcro closures, for carrying small items inside the case.

For more information, or to order a kit, write Hand Tool Industries, Inc., Department: ZC, 1933 Lake Street, Kent, OH 44240, or call 1-800-652-1234.

AUDIO SYSTEM ENHANCEMENT

Audio Pak Systems introduces the Audio Pak, peripheral attachment to video and pin games that can add a whole new dimension to the arcade market.

Audio Pak provides a stereophonic production of any video or pin game via its sound system. This has the advantage of intensifying the audio system in the game and blocking part of the arcade noise, moving the player one step closer to becoming a part of The Game.



The Audio Pak system is permanently attached to the host game in a matter of minutes. The only tools required are a drill, 1/4" bit and pliers. The units come with a template and all necessary wiring.

For more information, write Audio Pak Systems, 116 Catalina Ave., Redondo Beach, CA 90277, (213) 379-4474

FOUR FROM NU-LOOK

Nu-Look Products introduces four new products: Games Bond 007 contact cement, Wiz Magic, Liquid Speed, and Felt-Bond contact cement.

Games Bond 007 is a new aerosol adhesive spray. It is easy to work with, has extra holding power, and billiard table service companies have praised it.

For the operator who likes contact adhesive in a can, Nu-Looks' Felt-Bond is designed for all game tables. It is non-flammable and water resistant. It has excellent holding power and when it comes time to remove you don't have to



wrestle with it. This product is green in color and comes in a quart can or eight oz. can with a brush.

Nu-Look also offers Liquid Speed for shuffleboards. It reduces friction, can do a quicky wax job in three minutes, and comes in a 16 oz. pump spray that ensures a full 16 oz. product with no aerosol waste.

Wiz-Magic is a non-aerosol product excellent on shuffleboards and shuffle alleys. It helps reduce surface friction and increases speed.

According to Rick Hoffman, president of Nu-Look, "hopefully all the operators will stick with Nu-Look". If it cleans, slides, waxes or sticks.....we make it".

Nu-Look welcomes all inquiries from distributors and operators.

For more information or a free brochure, write Nu-Look Products, Inc., 1340 Stirling Road #10B, Dania, FL 33004, (305) 922-8877 or 922-8881.

INTERCOM CATALOG

Talk-A-Phone offers easy to install and operate intercoms ranging from two stations to unlimited station capacity.

A full color mini-catalog describes and illustrates the large variety of systems and options available, including equipment for office, business, and industry. The company offers a consulting service to help specify a system for individual needs.

For a free mini-catalog write Talk-A-Phone Co., 5013 N. Kedzie Ave., Chicago, IL 60625, or call (312) 539-1100.

CREATIVE INNOVATION BOOK

RHM & Associates offers a new textbook, *Disciplined Creative Innovation*, that shows companies and entrepreneurs how to turn new ideas into profitable sales.

The book leads the reader through the twelve tasks of taking a new idea to market and then presents a unique innovation logistics inventory for the readers use. Seventy checklists of critical points are presented throughout the book to detail the issues the reader must resolve to create profitable sales revenue from an innovative idea.

The book was written by Richard H. Montgomery, president of RHM, a market innovation consulting firm. The cost of the book is \$49.95.

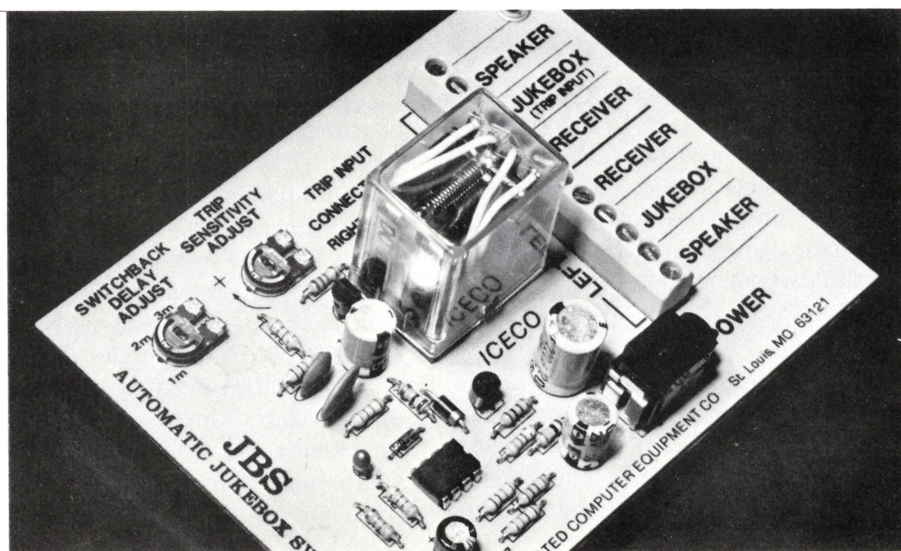
For more information, or to order the book, write RHM & Associates, 913 Helen Street, Midland, MI 48640, or call (517) 631-9334.

AUTOMATIC JUKEBOX SWITCH

Integrated Computer Equipment Co. (ICECO) announces an improved JBS Automatic Jukebox Switch. The new JBS offers jukebox operators an economical way to compete at locations where a stereo or background music (BGM) system is in use.

During record play, the JBS automatically silences the stereo or BGM program, and can switch the speakers from the stereo or BGM amplifier to the jukebox, extending coverage without having to duplicate the speaker installation. A silent period (adjustable from 10 seconds to 3 minutes) after the last record encourages replays.

The JBS is easily field installed on any make or model jukebox. The JBS electronically senses music from the jukebox; the only jukebox connection required is to the external speaker terminals. Detailed installation instructions are included. The price is \$42. For more information, write ICECO, 8507 Natural Bridge Rd., St. Louis, MO 63121, (314) 423-3390.



E-SOFT EXPANDS LINE

E-Soft Systems of Baxter, Minn., developer and distributor of CAMS, a computer system for route operators, and league management systems for darts and pool leagues, has now added hardware to their product line.

The main line of computers offered are compatible with the IBM AT class of machines and are made in America by Everex Systems, Inc. Systems are available in 8 MHZ, 10MHZ, or 8/10 MHZ (key-board switchable, 0 wait state) speeds, and all come with a one year warranty on parts and labor.

Printers offered are Epson, C-Itoh, Star, Seikosha, and Brother. All computer related products such as cables, diskettes, computer expansion boards, and various software packages are also in the new product line.

For more information, or free consultation, call (218) 829-4743.

TOUGH TOOL CASES

Jensen Tools introduces two tough new tool cases molded of high-density polyethylene, naturally thicker at corners and edges and formed without stress points. These Rota-Lux and Rota-Tough cases are engineered to last a lifetime and are now an available option for Jensen's leading tool kits, including the top-of-the-line JTK-87 Electronic Service Kit for field service engineers.

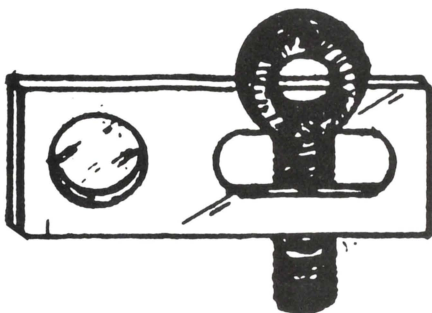
Rota-Lux and Rota-Tough cases vary slightly in size and styling. Five models are available in all, differing in depth from five inches to 10 inches. All feature two removable tool pouches, jet-black pebble-grain finish that will not chip, mar or fade; bail-type black chrome latches with fewer moving parts that open and close easily and quietly, and lock securely; anodized tongue and groove aluminum valence; full width reinforced piano hinge; reinforced ribs and raised perimeter rim to give additional strength and distinctive styling.

For more information and free catalog, write Jensen Tools, 7815 S. 46th St., Phoenix AZ 85044, (602) 968-6231.



SECURITY BAR

A-1 Products offers extra protection from vandalism with its Model S-6 4 1/2 inch security bar. This new, short style bar has been designed to satisfy the demands of many operators who have requested a good quality bar with an extra heavy, one-piece eyebolt of hardened steel that resists bolt cutters.



The A-1 bar is finished in tar black enamel to blend in with black cash doors. Offering maximum security, the eyebolt will accommodate practically any size padlock.

Installation is simple, and only one hole need be drilled into the cabinet. The cam lock on the front door is placed through the bar to hold it in place while a padlocked eyebolt is used to hold the plate against the cabinet.

For more information, write A-1 Products, 333 N. Queen St. Kinston, NC 28501, (919) 527-8241

LOW COST FORKLIFT

Ruger Equipment introduces a new low costs rider type forklift in two capacities - 1500 pounds and 3000 pounds.

These counterweighted lift trucks are for people who can't justify investing in a continuous duty unit. Ruger trucks come complete with batteries and built-in charger and are designed for four hours use out of one shift a day.

For more information, write Ruger Equipment, Inc., 615 W. 4th St., Uhrichsville, OH 44683, 800/25RUGER. In Ohio call 800/23RUGER.



CLASSIFIED

PLAY METER'S classified ads are sold by the column inch (\$30 per column inch with a 1 inch minimum). Prepayment must accompany ad. You may pay by check, money order, Visa or Master Card. Deadline is one month before you want the ad placed (August ad must be in by July 1). Send ad orders and payment to : PLAY METER Magazine, P.O. Box 24970, New Orleans, LA 70184. For more information, contact Jim Miller (504)488-7003.

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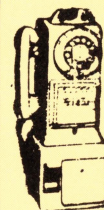
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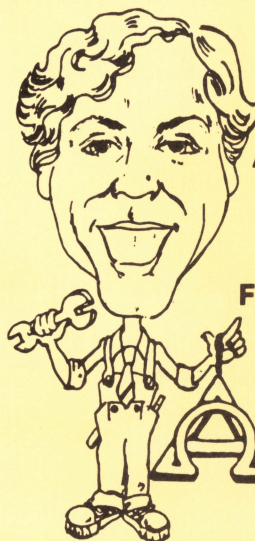
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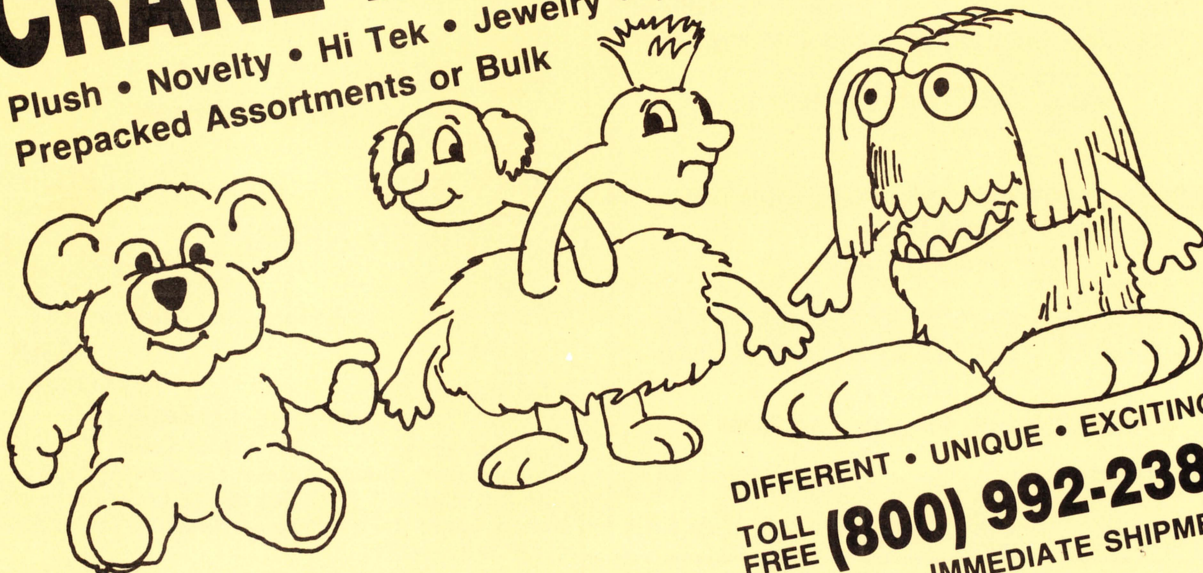
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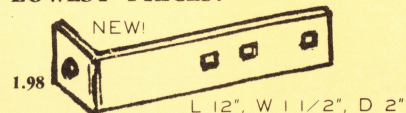
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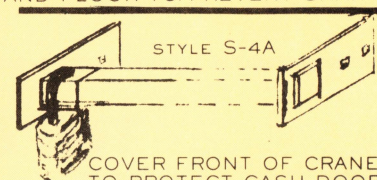
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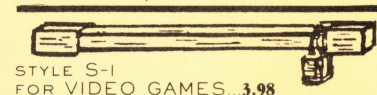
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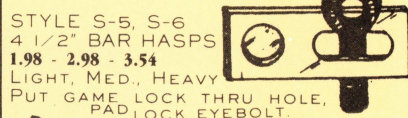
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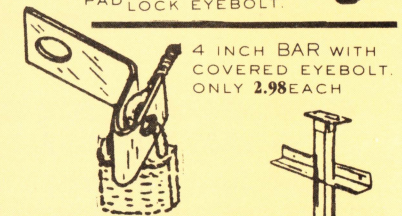
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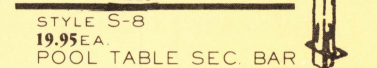
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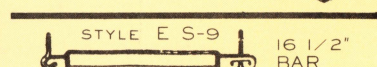
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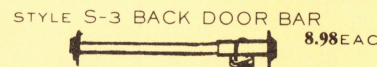


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THE CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER

17 18 19

33rd Annual West Virginia Music and Vending Association Annual Convention and Exposition, Wheeling, WV. Contact Leoma Ballard (304)949-3289.

25 26

The Michigan Coin Machine Operators Association Convention. Clarion Hotel, Lansing, MI. Contact Walt Maner, (517)372-2323.

OCTOBER

3 4

Utah Amusement Music Association annual state meeting, Salt Lake City Hilton. Contact Sherry (801)364-6172.

9 10 11

Pinball Expo '87. O'Hare Holiday Inn, Rosemont, IL. Flipp-Out '87 (pinball tournament) will be held during the show. Contact Robert Berk (216)369-1192.

9 10 11 12

MAA--AMOA New York City, 50th Anniversary Celebration at Kutsher's Country Club, Monticello, NY. Contact Judith Koppelman (212)245-7550.

23 24

Amusement and Music Operators of Virginia annual trade show and convention, Cavalier Hotel, Virginia Beach, VA. Call (804)262-9283.

NOVEMBER

4 5 6

Nightclub and Bar Expo National Conference, Atlantic City convention center, Atlantic City, NJ. Contact Nightclub & Bar Magazine (601)236-5510 or (800)247-3881.

4 5 6 7

International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions Annual Trade Show, New Orleans, LA. Call (703)671-5800.

5 6 7

Amusement and Music Operators Association (AMOA) Expo '87, Hyatt Regency, Chicago. Contact AMOA (312)565-4602.

5 6 7

Pay Phone Expo '87 East. Sheraton Bal Harbour Resort, Bal Harbour, FL. Contact Heidi Hagedorn at TeleStrategies (703)734-7050.

29 30 31 Nov.1

National Automatic Merchandising Association (NAMA) National Convention. Philadelphia Convention Center, Philadelphia, PA. Call (312)346-0370.

International Shows

OCTOBER 1987

5 6 7

JAMMA Expo, Ryutsu Center, Tokyo, Japan. Contact JAMMA (03)593-2563.

NOVEMBER 1987

13 14 15

FER '87, the Spanish Amusement Trade Show sponsored by FACOMARE, the Spanish Association of Amusement Machine Manufacturers, at the Alfonso XIII Palace of the Barcelona Fairgrounds. Contact Interwalia SA, Diagonal 474-08006, Barcelona, Spain. Phone: (93)218 58 50.

24 25 26 27

Spain's Induferias '87. For information contact Induferias, Apartado 476, Valencia, Spain. Call 364 00 11.

APRIL 1988

6 7 8 9

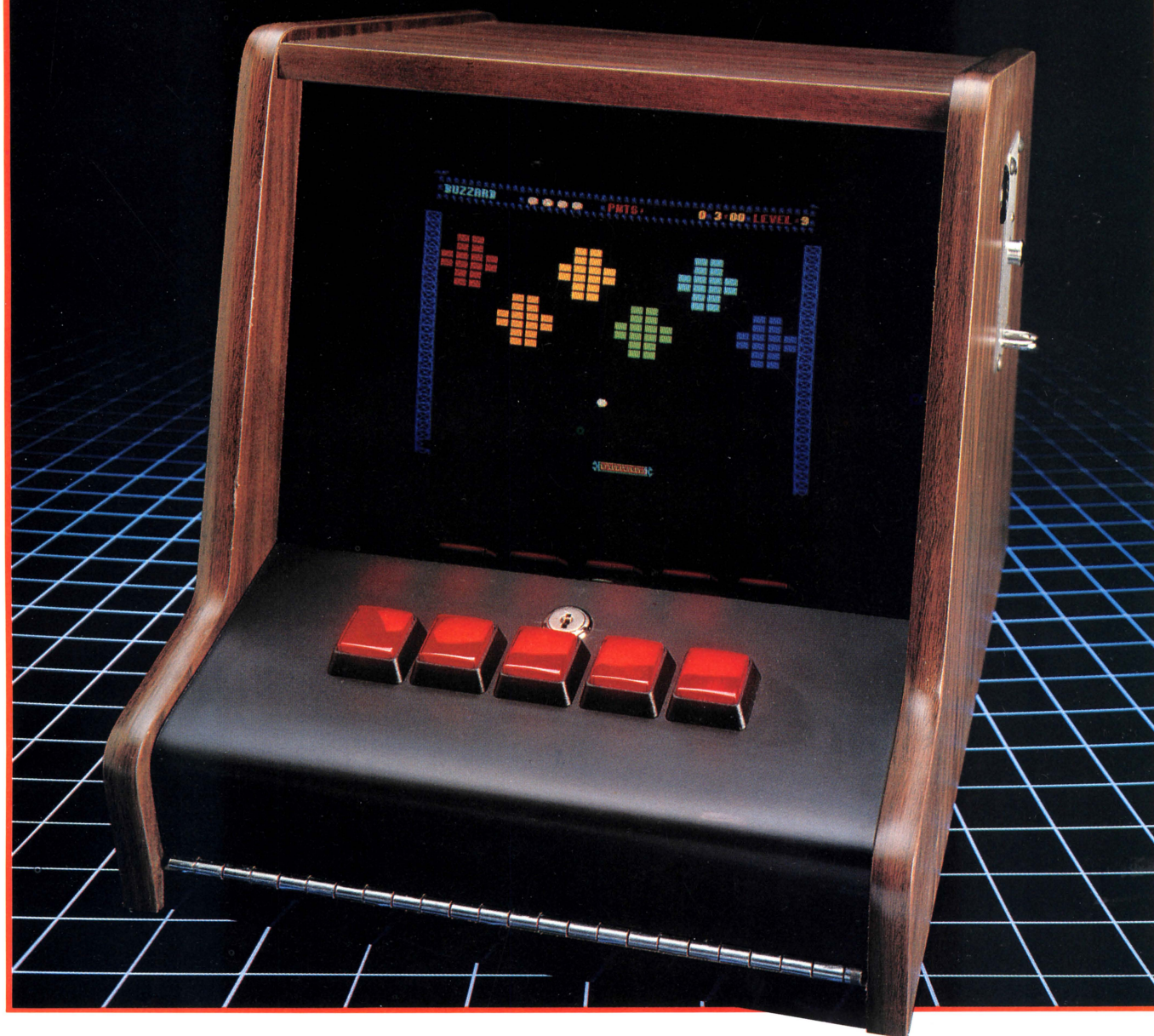
The Arab International Toys, Games, and Amusements Trade Fair, Dubai, United Arab Emirates. Contact World Trade Promotions, Ltd., 19-21 High St., Sutton, Surrey SM1 1NF England. Telephone 01-642-7688.

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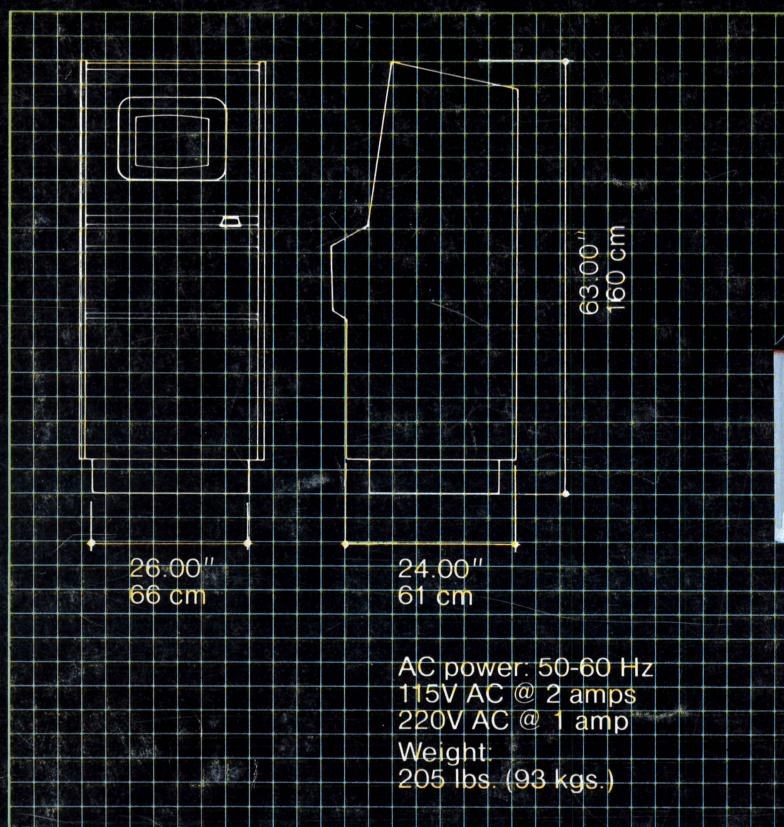
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